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Morte Arthure.

Morte Arthure.

EDITED FROM

ROBERT THORNTON'S MS. (AB. 1440 A.D.)

IN THE LIBRARY OF LINCOLN CATHEDRAL,

BY

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PREFACE.

It is confessedly almost impossible to fix on the exact point of time when the Semi-Saxon dialect, which had replaced the more formal Anglo-Saxon after the Norman Conquest, passed into the *Early English*. Those characteristic changes which constitute the *modernization* of a language were proceeding gradually. Inflections were being lost, distinctive marks of gender and case neglected, variations of meaning coming to be expressed rather by combinations of words than by changes in the words themselves, and the result was that about the middle of the thirteenth century England was speaking a language differing by a wide interval from that of the country three centuries before. This *Early English* stage of the language may be considered to extend from about the beginning of the reign of Henry III. to the end of that of Edward III., when it was succeeded by the *Middle English*.¹ During the whole of this period continual modification of the English tongue was going on. The language of the proclamation to the people of Huntingdonshire differs greatly from the language of Chaucer, and even from

¹ See Dr. Latham on "The English Language," chap. iii.; and "Hallam's Introduction to Literature of Europe," chap. i.

that of *Piers Plowman* and of the poem which is here put forth. It is probable that the *Morte Arthure* is somewhat later in date than *Piers Plowman*, but that it still falls within the period marked out for the limits of *Early English*. In comparing together the writings of this date we are at once struck by a distinction which seems to separate them into two classes. In Chaucer we see the tendency towards foreign words and idioms, and the adoption of the rhyming metre invented during the decay of the Latin tongue; in *Piers Plowman* and the *Morte Arthure* we trace the prevalence of the Saxon words and rhythm, the alliterative¹ or accented metre being preferred to the final cadence.

In the judgment of Warton the latter style was an evident and palpable barbarism. This critic severely censures the author of *Piers Plowman*, and, but that he was unacquainted with the *Morte Arthure*, would doubtless have included its author also in his condemnation—"Instead of availing himself of the rising and rapid improvements of the English language Longland prefers and adopts the style of the Anglo-Saxon poets. Nor did he make these writers the models of his language only: he likewise imitates their alliterative versification, which consisted in using an aggregate of words beginning with the same letter. But this imposed constraint of seeking identical initials and the affectation of obsolete English, by demanding a constant and necessary departure from the natural and obvious forms of expression, contributed also to render his manner extremely perplexed, and to disgust the readers with obscurities."² It is hoped that the readers of the following poem will not be so

¹ "Alliteration is the general character of all the early Gothic metres."—*Latham*.

² Warton's *History of English Poetry*, i. 266.

readily disgusted; those very obscurities which were so distasteful to the polite critic constituting some of the chief recommendation of the composition. It is hoped also that the poem will be welcomed not only on philological and grammatical grounds, but on the ground also of its own intrinsic merit—for the fire, vigour, and liveliness of its style, and the vast profusion of descriptive epithets which it pours out before the reader.

This version of the *Morte Arthure* is printed from a manuscript in the Library of Lincoln Cathedral, commonly known as the “Thornton Romances.” It is a thick volume containing several poems of the Arthur type, as well as many pieces in prose, both English and Latin. The greater part of this volume was written by Robert Thornton, a native of Oswaldkirk, in Yorkshire, and Archdeacon of Bedford in the Diocese of Lincoln, about the middle of the fifteenth century. The date of Archdeacon Thornton and his connection with Lincoln Cathedral can be ascertained pretty accurately, as among the archives of the Cathedral there is preserved an instrument or deed of considerable importance, attested by him as Archdeacon, which bears date 1439.¹

So valuable is this collection of ancient pieces which has been preserved by the labour of the Archdeacon, that doubtless all lovers of antiquity will be willing to concur in the wish with which the *Morte Arthure* concludes, “Thornton dictus sit benedictus.” The poem with which we are now concerned was first published from the Lincoln manuscript by Mr. Halli-

¹ This instrument is known by the name of the “*Laudum* of Alnwick,” and to this day every Prebendary of the Church takes oath on his admission to observe it. It is a decree (*id quod laudatum est*, approved or determined) of Bishop Alnwick, in reference to certain matters in dispute between the Dean and the Canons.

well in the year 1847. The form which was then adopted was that of an expensive quarto, and the value of the book was sought to be further enhanced by a rigid limitation of the issue to seventy-five copies. These have all, probably, long ago found their way into the great libraries of the country, and the poem has become as inaccessible to the general reader as though it had never been printed. Under these circumstances the Committee of the Early English Text Society have judged it desirable that a re-publication of the poem should be made. The present edition differs from that of Mr. Halliwell in the printing of two of his lines in one, in the marking by italic letters all expansions of the manuscript contractions, and the addition of side-notes and a glossary. In the first of these points the arrangement of the manuscript is followed, the lines being always written there as here printed. A comparison of the two methods will also, it is thought, result in a decided preference, as regards rhythm, of the method here used. With respect to the expansions of the contractions, it will be observed that there is no regularity in the spelling used, a final *e* being sometimes appended to words, sometimes not. Great care has, in fact, been taken to reproduce exactly the *irregularity* which is one of the most marked features of the spelling of this manuscript. In no case has a final *e* been added unless indicated by a strong and decided mark; while the threefold variation in the writing of words beginning with *th* has been carefully followed.¹ The form of

¹ *The, This, That, Thus, Thou, Thi, These*, etc., are sometimes written in this manuscript as at present spelled, sometimes with the Y and the final letter put over it, sometimes with the Y and the other letters following in a line; *e.g.* *That, Y^t, Yat, This, Y^s, Yis*. In the second of these cases the letters are printed in italic; in the third in roman type.

the thorn letter (þ) has been adopted in the printing, instead of the form used in the manuscript (Y), as it has been thought more agreeable to the date of the composition, and more in unison with the other publications of the same period printed by the E.E.T.S. There can be no doubt that the two forms represent substantially the same sound. The text having undergone several careful collations with the manuscript, it is hoped that it is as near perfect as may be. In some few points it will be found to differ from the very accurate edition of Mr. Halliwell.

As to the poem itself, it is held by Sir F. Madden that this is the "Gret gest of Arthure" composed by Huchowne, a Scotch ballad writer of the fourteenth century. This opinion is combated by Mr. Morris in his Preface to "Alliterative Poems," who proves that the poem was not originally written in the Scotch dialect, but in one of the Northumbrian dialects spoken South of the Tweed. Mr. Morris is also of opinion that the text of the poem had been considerably altered by a Midland transcriber before it fell into the hands of Robert Thornton. Thornton, as a Northumbrian, would probably have preferred the original reading, but finding the manuscript with its Southern modifications, he transcribed it as it stood, without attempt at restoration. In spite, however, of his having yielded to the changes of Southern transcribers, it is certain that we owe to Robert Thornton, of Oswaldkirk, a great debt of gratitude for having made a copy of the poem which has survived to our day. It is a grand specimen of Early English poetry, exhibiting some fine traits common to the early poetry of many nations, and certain special peculiarities of its own which are well worth careful study.

In almost all early poetry may be noted a simplicity of language united with what may be termed a recklessness of assertion and a contempt of the conditions required for constituting the probable. Effect is sought to be produced not by the subtle analysis of thought and feeling, nor by the description of scenery and natural objects, but by the crowding together of startling incidents, and the ascription of marvellous powers and prowess to the favoured hero. Early poetry is, as it were, the expression of inexperience, of thoughtlessness and light-heartedness, not bearing the marks of a complicated state of society, where the restless struggle for social superiority absorbs the energies and gives a grave cast to the reflections. Now this gay and light-hearted character seems to be eminently characteristic of the *Morte Arthure*. The ease with which "fifty thousand of folke are felled at ones" when they stand in the way of the victory of the knights; the jovial vein in which Arthur cleaves asunder the giant Colapas, bidding him come down and "karpe to his feris," for that "he is too high by half" to do so comfortably in his giant form; the character of Sir Gawaine, "the gude man of arms," who is so eminent a favourite with the poet because he was "the gladdest of othire,"

"And the hendeste in haule undire hevене riche,"

all testify to this.

And united with this light-hearted vein the least glimpse at the poem will reveal the noble contempt for the probable which it exhibits. Illustration of this is unnecessary, as the whole poem illustrates it. The author might indeed plead that he was not responsible for the "facts;" that he took them from good authority, even from the grave historian, Geoffrey of Monmouth, who has duly chronicled, in choice mediæval Latin,

the adventures of Arthur and his wars with "Sir Lucius." And, truly, few readers of the poem would desire him to have been possessed of a greater critical acumen, and to have set to work to discriminate, select, and weigh probabilities. Better is it to have the original romance in all its richness and raciness, than any amended or more respectable version of the deeds of the "rich king." Arthur is here a "kydd conqueror" throughout; even in his final conflict inflicting poetical justice on the villain Modred, and dying happily among his people, with the nation sorrowing at his tomb. But in this poem, not only is a grand romance given in highly-spirited diction; there are also passages which show a keen appreciation of the beauties of nature, and others which breathe a truly touching pathos. Of the first character especially are the descriptions of the river banks and woodland copse through which Arthur and his knights ride when they go to combat the giant,¹ and of the spot chosen for the midday halt by the party headed by Sir Florent.²

¹ Thane they roode by that ryver, that rynnyd so swythe,
 Thare the ryndez overrechez with realle bowghez;
 The roo and the rayne-dere reklesse thare rounene,
 In ranez and in rosers to ryotte thame selvene.
 All the feulez thare fleschez, that flyez with wengez,
 Fore thare galedede the gowke one grevez fulle lowde.
 Of the nyghtgale notez the noizez was swette,
 They threpyde with the throstills thre-hundreth at ones!
 That whate swowyng of watyr, and syngyng of byrdez,
 It myghte salve hyme of sore, that sounde was nevere!
 —(ll. 920-932.)

² And in the myste mornynge one a mede falles,
 In swathes sweppene downe fulle of swete floures:
 Thare unbrydilles theis bolde, and baytes theire horses,
 To the gryngyng of the daye, that byrdes gane synge;
 Whylls the surs of the sonne, that sonde es of Chryste,
 That solaces alle synfulle, that syghte has in erthe.
 —(ll. 2506-2512.)

Of the latter, Arthur's beautiful lament over Sir Gawaine,¹ and his touching reflections on his dead knights.² The writer of this romance was assuredly not wanting in the feeling of true poetry, while his vigorous diction and his extraordinary power of heaping epithets upon epithets prove great skill and proficiency in the difficult style of versification which he had adopted. As specimens of this vigour and life we can, perhaps, adduce no better instances than the account of the banquet given to the Romans,³ and of the embarkation of Arthur's army.⁴

- ¹ Dere kosyne o kynde, in kare am I levede !
 For nowe my wirchipe es wente, and my were endide !
 Here es the hope of my hele, my happynge of armes !
 My concelle, my comfortho, that kepide myne herte !
 Of alle knyghtes the kynde that undir Criste lifede.
 My wele and my wirchipe of alle this werlde riche
 Was wonnene thourghe Sir Gawaine, and thourghe his witte one !
 —(ll. 3957-3965.)

- ² Here rystys the riche blude of the rownde table,
 Rebukkede with a rebawde, and rewthe es the more !
 I may helples one hethe house be myne one,
 Alles a wafulle wedowe that wanttes hir beryne !
 I may werye and wepe, and wrynge myne handys,
 For my wytt and my wyrchipe awaye es for ever !
 Of alle lordchips I take leve to mye ende !
 Here es the Bretones blode broughte owt of lyfe,
 And nowe in this journee alle my joye endys !
 —(ll. 4283-4292.)

- ³ Pacockes and plovers in platers of golde,
 Grett swannes fulle swythe in sylveryne chargeours,
 Tartes of Turkey, taste whane thame lykys ;
 Gumbaldes graythely, fulle gracious to taste ;
 Bernakes and botures in baterde dysches,
 Fesauntes enflureschit in flammande silver,
 With darielles endordide, and daynteez ynewe.
 —(ll. 182-199.)

- ⁴ Coggez and crayers, than crossez thaire mastez,
 Wyghtly one the wale thay wye up thaire ankers.
 Holly with-owttyne harme thay hale in bottles,
 Schipe-mene scharply schotene thaire portez,

One of the most prominent marks of the style of this poem is the "stereotyped" epithet: "the rich king," "the kydd conqueror," "faire stedes," "galyard knights," "cruel words," Sir Cadur "the kene," Sir Bedwere "the rich," Sir Gawaine "the good," are constantly recurring. We recognize one of the marked peculiarities of the great father of epic, who wrote of the "swift-footed Achilles," the "glancing-plumed Hector," the "many-murmuring sea," "horse-feeding Argos," and the "long-haired Greeks." The unartificial nature of early poetry allows the constant recurrence of the same ideas. The epithet is rather part of the subject than a predicate, and the main business of the poem being not so much description as narration, there seems a fitness in the hero being constantly kept before our eyes as the possessor of certain attributes, while the great deeds which justify his "style and title" are recorded.

Another noteworthy peculiarity in the poem is the use of the adjective with the demonstrative pronoun without the substantive, *e.g.* "tha steryne," "this sorrowfulle," "that hathelle," "this kene," "that realle." This, which is akin to the Latin use, marks a stage of the language which has long passed away. Of a like character is the idiom common in this poem of putting the objective case of the pronoun before the verb—"ȝif *me* the life happene," "that *him* over land folowes." Observable also is the constant recurrence of the indefinite expressions "when he likes," "when they like," etc. Not only the stereotyped epithet, but the stereotyped phrase also, occurs regularly in

Launchez lede apone lufe, lacchene ther depez,
 Lukkez to the lade-sterne whene the lyghte faillez,
 For drede of the derke nyghte thay drecchede a lyttille,
 And alle the steryne of the streme strekyne at onez.

—ll. 738-755.)

certain connections, and sometimes gives a highly ludicrous turn to the narrative by its inappropriateness to the sense.

The strong ecclesiastical tone which pervades the poem will not fail to be noticed by any reader. Not only are the dying knights duly attended by a confessor, shriven and comforted with the last Sacraments, but there is observable in several passages a most zealous care against interfering with the goods of the "spiritualty." When a grant is made of a city it is only "the temporall" which is granted, and the way in which Arthur is made to say

"I gyffe my protteccione to alle the pope landez,
It is a foly to offende oure fadyr undire Gode,
Owther Peter or Paule tha postles of Rome.
3iff we spare the spirituelle, we spede bot the bettire,"

sufficiently speaks for itself.

The Editor desires to express his thanks to Mr. R. Morris for his valuable help in preparing the Glossary.

On the rhythm of the alliterative metre a paper has been kindly communicated by the Rev. W. W. Skeat, M.A., of Christ's College, Cambridge, who has made English metre his especial study. This is here subjoined.

It is only needful further to state that one sheet of the poem having been inadvertently sent to the press before the final collation with the manuscript was made, a list of *corrigenda* (most of them unimportant) has to be supplied.

WADDINGTON RECTORY,
September, 1865.

ON THE METRE OF THE POEM.

The metre in which the "Morte Arthure" is written may best be understood by comparing it with "Piers Plowman," the accentuation and *swing* of the verse being much better marked in the last-mentioned poem. The principles which govern this peculiar metre may thus be more readily discerned, and, when once understood, may easily be applied to the present poem.

For a similar reason, it will be the simplest method to consider, first of all, a few lines (of "Piers Plowman") where the metre is most strongly marked, and, afterwards, some where it is, apparently, less regular.

It should first, however, be observed that each complete line in an alliterative poem consists generally of two *sections*, which were separated in old manuscripts by a dot, called the *metrical point* or *pause*, and which may conveniently be denoted by a colon (as in the Prayer Book Version of the Psalms), thus:—

"Schelde us fro schamesdede: and sinfulle werkes;"

or else by printing the lines thus:—

"Schelde us fro schamesdede,
And sinfulle werkes."

In reading aloud a pause may conveniently be made between the sections.

The two sections form, however, but one complete line; and, as the metrical point is more necessary when the poem is to be sung or recited than when it is merely to be read, it has not been thought necessary to insert it in this edition, as the reader, when he has once caught the rhythm of the verse, may always be tolerably sure as to where it must occur.

To begin, then ; consider the line—

“In séttynge and sówyng
Swónken ful hárde.”

—*Piers Plowman*; ed. Wright, l. 41.

If we use an asterisk to denote a strongly-accented¹ syllable, the figure 1 to denote a *single* unaccented syllable, the figure 2 to mean *two* unaccented syllables immediately succeeding each other, and so on ; we may represent the above line by the scheme,

1 * 2 * 1 : * 2 * 1 ;

and this may be taken as a convenient type of alliterative lines, from which the scansion of very many others may be readily deduced. Some, however, as will be shewn presently, must be referred to a type somewhat different.

Now, we here observe (1) that each section contains two strong accents ; (2) that, of the strongly-accented syllables, three begin with a common letter, which has been called the *rime-letter* ; and (3) of these three, two occur in the first section, and one in the second. Such is the usual and normal arrangement. The *rime-letters* may be either consonants or vowels, and may consist of *single* letters, or of such combinations as *sc*, *bl*, *tr*, etc. If vowels, it is sufficient that they *are* so ; they need not be the *same* vowels, and, in practice, are generally *different*.

Again, the last strongly-accented syllable in the line does *not* begin with the rime-letter. This also is the usual and more correct arrangement.

Having once this typical form to refer to, it is easy to enumerate most of the changes which may arise. Let us now take the line,

“Hire² mésar and hire mâtyns,
And mány of hire hoúres.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 193.

We have here the arrangement

1 * 2 * 1 : 1 * 3 * 1

¹ I use the term *strongly*-accented advisedly, all accents not being equal. Thus, in the line—

“On the oát-grass and the swórd-grass, and the búlrush in the póol,”

the syllables marked are *strongly*-accented.

² “Hire is a monosyllable.”—*Guest on English Rhythms*; ed. 1838, p. 34.

which shews (1) that an unaccented syllable may be introduced at the beginning of the second section; and (2) that the number of intermediate unaccented syllables may be readily increased to *three*.

Now herein lies the peculiar freedom and elasticity of alliterative verse; we shall soon find by observation that, under certain circumstances, as many as *four* short unaccented syllables (even if they contain among them one that is accented *slightly*) may be inserted at pleasure between the emphatic syllables without destroying the rhythm; for it is one addressed to the *ear* only, and not to the *eye*. The chief point which the poet has to take care of is that when he introduces a larger number of unaccented syllables, they should be capable of rapid enunciation, lest the verse seem clogged and unmusical. An example may be seen in the lines,

“Fáiteden for her fóode,
Fóughten at the ále.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 83.

Which may be denoted by

* 4 * 1 : * 3 * 1

It would take up too much space to explain here the true method of scanning the lines by division into feet; it may suffice to say that the *general effect* of the metre is *dactylic*, supposing the term *dactyl* to be capable of application to an *English* foot, which, to speak strictly, it is not. Indeed, the nomenclature of English prosody is in sore need of alteration. Neither is there space to explain, and to account for, the curious variations which may further be made in the alliterative metre. The view here given is only an approximate one, which will be found useful in practice. A longer passage may exemplify it better—

“I lóked me on my léft half
As the lády me taúghte,
And was wár of a wómmán
Wóρθilich y-clóthed,
Púrfiled with pélure,
The fýnest upon érthe,
Y-córouned with a córoun,
The kýng hath none bétter;
Fétisliche hyr fingres
Were frétted with góld wyr.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 892.

<i>Analysis:</i>	1	*	4	*	1	:	2	*	2	*	1
	2	*	2	*	1	:		*	3	*	1
		*	3	*	1	:	1	*	3	*	1
	1	*	4	*	1	:	1	*	2	*	1
		*	3	*	1	:	1	*	2	*	1

One variation, however, found oftenest in the first section, is too important to be passed over. It is that we sometimes find in a section a *third* strongly-accented syllable, thus giving to the line a rather unwieldy length; as in,

“The móoste míschief on móide
Is móuntynne wel fáste.”

—*Piers Plowman*, l. 133.

This third accent is often very awkwardly placed, as in the first line of “Morte Arthure,”

“Now grétt glórious Gódd: thurgh gráce of hym selvene.”

Other noticeable deviations from the strict type may be briefly indicated.

(1) The syllable beginning with the rime-letter is sometimes unemphatic; as in “Morte Arthure,” l. 59,

“In Glamórgan with glée: thare gládschip was évere.”

(2) Sometimes there are but *two* rime-letters, as in l. 80,

“So cóme in sódanly; a sénatour of Róme.”

(3) Sometimes there is *no* alliteration, as in l. 70. (4) Sometimes there are *four* rime-letters, as l. 32, where all belong to accented syllables,

“Scáthylle Scóttlande by skýlle: he skýstys as hym lýkys;”

or as in l. 35, where one belongs to an unaccented syllable,

“Hólaund and Hénawde: they hélde of hym bóthe.”

It will now be sufficient, perhaps, to indicate what is probably the correct accentuation of the first fourteen lines, as this will enable the reader to perceive in them a certain vigorous *swing* (well suited for the ballad-reciter), which will suggest the scansion of most other lines, though there is always somewhat of difficulty in it, from the fact that we have now-a-days changed the accentuation of many words, and cannot be quite certain about the final *e*'s.

“Now grétt glórious Gódd: thurgh gráce of hym sélvene,
And the précious práyere: of hys prýs móder

Schélde us ffro schámesdede : and sýnfulle wérkes,
 And gýffe us gráce to gýe : and góverne us hére
 In thys wréchyd wérld : thorowe vért[u]ous lýwyng
 That we may káyre till hys cóurte : the kýngdome of hévyne,
 Whene oure sáules schall pártē : and sándyre ffra the bódy
 Ewyre to bélde and to býde : in blýsse with hyme sélvene ;
 And wýsse me to wérpe owte : some wórde at this týme,
 That nothyre vóyde be ne váyne : bot wýrchip tille hyme sélvyne ;
 Plésande and prófitabille : to the pópale þat theme héres.
 þe that liste has to lýth : or lúffes for to hére
 Off élders of álde tyme : and of their áwke dédys,
 Hów they were léle in their láwe : and lóvede Gód Almýghty," etc.

The accentuation of the last two lines is a little doubtful. There may have been an accent on the second *of* in l. 13, owing to its position and the fact of its beginning with a rime-letter ; while in l. 14 we have the rather unusual number of six accents, unless "how" was slurred over.

After all, the best way of perceiving the rhythm is to read over some fifty lines several times till they seem quite familiar, and then to read them over once more *out loud*, with strong emphasis on the verbs, substantives, and adjectives, and with a natural and free pronunciation.

CORRIGENDA.

The Roman *e* at the end of the following words should be read *e* Italic :—Falterde, line 1092; schovelle-fotede, 1098; schowande, 1099; yryne, 1105; alle, 1105, 1253, 1310, 1323; ffulle, 1112, 1125, 1346, 1520, 1576; evylle, 1116; wapyne, 1119; harde, 1135; balefulle, 1136; wrythyng, 1141; forfeted, 1155; howelle, 1180; irene, 1186; christene, 1187; wapene, 1193; whilles, 1197; thare-ine, 1254; wille, 1257; hym-selvene, 1304; mene, 1315; castelles, 1339; lytille, 1423; kyng, 1507; salle, 1511; takyne, 1519; wille, 1556; selfene, 1560; one, 1573; salle, 1575.

To the following words an Italic *e* should be appended :—Kyng, 1106, 1110, 1127, 1263; feyed, 1114; tung, 1250; howsyng, 1284.

In the following words the *n* should be read Italic :—Accountes, 1102; sergeaunt, 1173; presonne, 1632.

In the following the syllable *er* should be read Italic :—Over, 1142; soveraygne, 1167; gleterande, 1280; delyverde, 1548.

In the following the syllable *ur* should be read Italic :—*our*, 1480; Petur, 1519.

For skyste,	92, 1643,	read skyfte.
„ aperty,	212,	„ a party.
„ arouede,	340,	„ arouede.
„ knelande,	1137,	„ kneland.
„ Lucius,	1267,	„ Lucius.
„ unfawghte,	1306,	„ unsawghte.
„ be,	1327,	„ bee.
„ salle,	1364,	„ sable.
„ brene,	1380,	„ brene.
„ entters,	1499,	„ enters.
„ heynne,	2436,	„ hepyne (?).
„ welle,	2706,	„ welles.
„ dyghte,	3066,	„ nyghte.
„ nyghte,	3267,	„ dyghte.
„ lene,	3350,	„ leve.
„ <i>see</i> at <i>yorke</i> ,	3912,	„ <i>ede</i> at <i>joske</i> .

Morte Arthure.

Here begynnes Morte Arthure. In nomine
Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen
pro charite. Amen.

Now grett glorious Godd, thurgh grace of hym selvene,
And the precyous prayere of hys prys modyr,
Schelde us ffro schamesdede and synfulle werkes,

The poet prays
for grace,

- 4 And gyffe us grace to^{*}gye, and governe us here,
In this wrechyd werld, thorowe vertous lywyng,
That we may kayre til hys courte, the kyngdome of hevyne,
Whene oure saules schalle parte and sundyre ffra the body,
8 Ewyre to belde and to byde in blysse with hyme selvene;
And wysse me to werpe owte some worde at this tyme,
That nothyre voyde be ne vayne, bot wyrchip till hyme
selvyne;

*dwell / walk single

*travel

*rest in safety

and for power to
write something
profitable.

Plesande and profitabille to the pople þat theme heres.

- 12 þe that liste has to lyth, or luffes for to here,
Off elders of alde tyme and of theire awke dedys,
How they were lele in theire lawe, and lovede God Almyghty,
Herkyne me heyndly and holdys þow styлле,
16 And I salle telle þow a tale, þat trewe es and nobyllе,
Off the ryealle renkys of the rowunde table,
That chefe ware of chevalrye and cheftans nobyllе,
Bathe ware in thire werkes and wyse mene of armes,

Ye that list to
hear of strange
deeds of old,

hearken to a tale
of the Round
Table.

These knights
were noble, wise,
and brave,

kind, and courteous, and worshipful.

They slew Lucius, lord of Rome, and conquered his kingdom.

Hear now the story.

When King Arthur had won back all the realm of Uther,

Argyle, Orkney, and the isles

Ireland and Scotland,

Wales, Flanders, and France,

had made tributary Holland and Hainault, Burgundy and Brabant, Brittany, Guienne, Gothland and Greece.

He built Bayonne and Bordeaux, Tours and Toul;

was prince of Poitiers and Provence, of Valence and Vienne, of Erugia and Aniana, of Naverne and Normandy.

Of Germany, of Austria, and many other lands.

He conquered all Denmark with his sword.

Then he dubbed his knights and gave them lands.

Created kings anointed.

Then rested the hero, and held the Round Table.

20 Doughty in their doyns and dredde ay schame,
Kynde mene and courtays, and couthe of courte thewes.

How they whanne wyth were wyrchippis many,
Sloughe Lucyus þe lythyre, that lorde was of Rome,

24 And conquerd that kyngryke thorowe craftys of armes;
Herkenes now hedyrwarde, and herys this storie.

Qwene that the kyng Arthur by conqueste hade wonnyne
Castelles and kyngdoms, and contreez many,

28 And he had coverede the coroune of the kyth ryche
Of alle that Uter in erthe aughte in his tyme,

Orgayle and Orkenay, and alle this owte iles,
Irelande uttirly, as occyane rynnys;

32 Scathylle Scottlande by skylle he skystys as hym lykys,
And Wales of were he wane at hys wille,

Bathe fflaundrez and ffraunce fre til hym selvyne;
Holaund and Henawde they helde of hyme bothe,

36 Burgoyne and Brabane, and Bretayne the lesse,
Gyane and Gothelande, and Grece the ryche;

Bayone and Burdeux he beldytt fullle faire,
Turoyne and Tholus with toures fullle hye;

40 Off Peyters and of Provynce he was prynce holdyne,
Of Valence and Vyenne, off value so noble;
Of Eruge and Anyone, thos erledoms ryche,
By conqueste fullle cruelle þey knewe hym fore lorde;

44 Of Naverne and Norwayne, and Normaundye eke,
Of Almayne, of Estriche, and oþer ynowe;
Danmarke he dryssede alle by drede of hym selvyne,
Fra Swynne unto Swether-wyke, with his swrede kene!

48 Qwenne he thes dedes had done, he doubbyd hys knyghtez,
Dyvysyde dowcherys and delte in dyverse remmes;
Mad of his cosyns kyngys ennoyntede,
In kyth there they covaitte crounes to bere.

52 Whene he thys rewmes hade redyne and rewlyde the pople,
Then rystede that ryalle and helde þe Rounde Tabylle;
Suggeourns þat sesone to solace hyme selvene,

country
kingdoms

arranges

ruled

- In Gretayne þe braddere,¹ as hym beste lykys ;
 56 Sythyne wente into Wales *with* his wyes alle,
 Sweys into Swaldye with his snelle houndes,
 For to hunt at þe hartes in thas hye laundes,
 In Glamorgane *with* glee, thare gladchipe was *evere* ;
 60 And thare a citee he sette, be assente of his lordys,
 That Caerlyone was callid, *with* curious walles,
 On the riche revare þat rynnys so faire,
 There he myghte semble his sorte to see whenne hym lykyde,
 64 Thane aftyre at Carlelele a Cristynmese he haldes,
 This ilke kyde ^{famous} conquerour, *and* helde hym for lorde,
 Wyth Dukez *and* dusperes of dyvers rewmes,
 Erles *and* erchevesqes, and oþer ynowe,
 68 Byschopes *and* bachelers, *and* banerettes nobile,
 þat bowes to his banere, buske whene hym lykys :
 Bot on the Cristynmesdaye, whene they were alle semblyde,
 That comlyche conquerour commaundez hym selvyne
 72 þat ylke a lorde sulde lenge, and no lefe take,
 To the tende day fully ware takyne to þe ende.
 Thus one ryalle araye he helde his rounde table,
 With semblant *and* solace *and* selcouthe metes ;
 76 Whas never syche noblay, in no manys tyme,
 Mad in mydwynter in þa Weste marchys !
 Bot on the newzere daye, at þe none evyne,
 As the bolde at the borde was of brede *servyde*,
 80 So come in sodanly a senatour of Rome,
 Wyth sextene knyghtes in a soyte sewande hym one.
 He saluzed the soverayne *and* the sale aftyre,
 Ilke a kynge aftyre kynge,² *and* mad his enclines ;
 84 Gaynour in hir degre he grette as hym lykyde,
 And syne agayne to þe gome he gaffe up his nedys :
 " Sir Lucius Iberius, the Emperour of Rome,

After solacing
himself in Bri-
tain, he goes into
Wales,

to hunt the hart
with his swift
houndes,

and in Glamorgan
founds Caerleon
upon Usk.

At Caerleon he
holds high festi-
val at Christmas-
tide with his lords
and bishops,

and bids none
depart from the
feast till ten days
are expired.

Never was so
noble a feast
known.

But on New
Year's day, as
the knights were
feasting,
there came in
suddenly a Sena-
tor of Rome,
attended by six-
teen knights,
who salutes King
Arthur and his
knights,

and Guinevre the
Queen.

Then, in the
name of Sir Lu-

¹ "The More Bretayne Englonð is
As men may rede on Cronyclys."

—*Arthur* (ed. F. J. Furnivall), l. 503.

² A tag (†) is appended to these g's, which is taken to indicate a final *e*. Halliwell reads it without the *e*.

cus Iberius, the
Emperor of
Rome,

Salu; the as sugett, undyre his sele ryche ;

88 It es credens, *syr* kyng, *with* cruelle wordez, *document*
Trow it for no truffles, his targe es to schewe!
Now in this new;ers daye *with* notaries sygne,

He summons Ar-
thur to appear at
Rome on Lammas
day,

I make the somouns in sale to sue for þi landys,

92 That on Lammesse daye thare be no lette ffoundene,
þat thou bee redy at Rome *with* alle thi rounde table,
Appere in his presens *with* thy price knyghtez,
At pryme of the daye, in payne of þour lyvys,

96 In þe kydd capytoile before þe kyng selvyne,
Whene he and his senatours bez sette as them lykes,

to answer why
he occupies his
lands instead of
paying homage
to him,

To ansuere anely why thow occupyes the laundeze,
That awe homage of alde tille hym *and* his eldyrs ;

100 Why thow has redyne and raymede, *and* raunsound þe pople,
And kyllde doun his cosyns, kyngys ennoynttyde ;
Thare schalle thow gyffe rekkynynge for alle thy round
table,

and how he dares
to rebel against
him.

Why thow arte rebelle to Rome, and rentez theme
wytholdez !

104 ȝiff thow theis sommons wythsytte, he sendes thie thies
wordes,

But if Arthur
will not come,
the Emperor will
invade his land
and take him
captive,

He salle the seke over þe see wyth sextene kynges,
Bryne Bretayne þe brade, and bryttyne thy knyghtys,
And brynge the bouxsomly as a beste *with* brethe whare
hym lykes,

108 That thow ne schalle rowte ne ryste undyr the hevene
ryche,

þose thow for reddour of Rome ryne to þe erthe !
ffor if thow flee into Fraunce or ffreselaund owþer,
þou salle be feched *with* force, and oversette for ever !

and destroy him
wherever he may
fly.

The Register of
Rome declares
that Arthur's fa-
ther paid tribute,
which was won
by Julius Cæsar
and his gentle
knights.

Then did king
Arthur look with
ferocious glance
on the Senator.

112 Thy fadyr mad fewtee, we fynde in oure rollez,
In the regestre of Rome, who so ryghte lukez :
With-owttyne more trouflyng the trebute we aske,
That Julius Cesar wane wyth his jentille knyghttes !"

116 **T**he kynge blyschit one the beryne with his brode eghne,
þat fulle brymly for breth brynte as the gledys ;

Keste colours as kyng with crouelle lates,
Luked as a lyone, and on his lyppe bytes!

- 120 The Romaynes for radnesse ruschte to þe erthe,
fforde ferdnesse of hys face, as they fey were;
Cowchide as kenetez before þe kynges selvyne,
be-cause of his contenance confusede theme semede!

So terrible was his face that the Romans couched and quailed before him.

- 124 Thene coverd up a knyghte, *and* criede ful lowde,¹
“Kynges coronned of kynd, curtays and noble,
Misdoo no messengere for menske of þi selvyne,
Sen we are in thy manrede, and mercy þe besekes;

Then one of them humbly entreates mercy.

- 128 We lenge with *syr* Lucius, that lorde es of Rome,
That es þe mervelyousteste mane þat on molde lengez;
It es lefulle till us his likynges till wyrche;²
We come at his commaundment; have us excusede.”

- 132 Then carpys þe conquerour crewelle wordez,—
“Haa! cravaunde knyghte! a cowarde þe semez!
pare some segge in this sale, and he ware sare grevede,
Thow durste noghte fulle alle Lumberdye luke one hym
ones.”

Upon which Arthur upbraids him as a coward.

- 136 “Sir,” sais þe Senatour, “so Crist mott me helpe,
þe voute of thi vesage has woundyde us alle!
Thow arte þe lordlyeste lede þat ever I one lukyde;
By lukynges, with-owt tyne lesse, a lyone the semys!”

But the Senator excuses him on the ground that Arthur's visage is very terrible.

- 140 “Thow has me somond,” *quod* þe kyng, “and said what
þe lykes;³

Fore sake of thy Soveraynge I suffre the þe more;
Sen I coround in kyth wyth crysume enoyntede,
Was never creature to me þat carpede so large!

- 144 Bot I salle tak concelle at kynges enoyntede,
Off dukes *and* duspers and doctours noble,
Offe peres of the perlement, prelates *and* oþer,
Off þe richeste renkys of þe rounde table;

The King tells him that he will take counsel of his dukes, doctors, peers, and knights,

- 148 þus schalle I take avisemente of valiant beryns,

¹ *hyghe* in text, erased, and *lowde* written in margin.

² The text has *shewe* which has been erased, and *wyrche* written in the margin.

³ *Likyd* erased and *lykes* written in margin.

- Wyrke aftyre the wytte of my wyes knyghttes :
 To warpe wordez in waste no wyrchipp it were,
 Ne wilfully in þis wrethe to wreken^e my selvene.
- while the Romans stay a week
 to refresh themselves. 152 For-þi salle þow lenge here, *and* lugge wyth þise lordes,
 This sevenyghte in solace, to suggourne þour horses,
 To see whatte lyfe þat wee leede in thees law laundes."
 ffor by þe realtee of Rome, þat recheste was evere,
- Sir Cayous is bid
 to entertain the
 lords, 156 He commande syr Cayous, take kepe to thoos lordez,
 To styghtylle þa steryne mene as theire statte askys,
 That they bee herberde in haste in thoos heghe chambres ;
 Sythine sittandly in-sale servyde ther-aftyre ;
- and their horses. 160 That they fynd na fawte of fude to thi^er horsez,
 Nowthire weyne ne waxe, ne welthe in þis erthe ;
 Spare for no spycerye, bot spende what þe lykys,
 That there be largeste one lofte, and no lake foundene ;
- He was not to
 spare, but to
 feast them liber-
 ally. 164 If þou my wyrchip wayte wy be my trouthe,
 þou salle have gersoms fulle grett, þat gayne salle þe evere!"
- And right richly
 did they fare. **N**ow er they herberde in hey, *and* in oste holdene,
 Hastyly wyth hende mene *with-in* thees heghe wallez ;
- Their chambers
 were furnished
 with chimneys. 168 In chambyrs *with* chympnes þey chaungene þeire wedez ;
 And sythyn^e the chauncelere þeme fetchede *with* chevalrye
 noble ;
- The Senator sat
 at the King's
 table, and was
 served like him-
 self, 172 Sone þe senatour was sett, as hyme wele semyde,
 At þe kynggez ownne borde ; twa knyghtes hym *servede*,
 Singulere sothely, as Arthure hym selvyne,
 Richely on þe ryghte haunde at the rounde table ;
- for the Romans
 are of the most
 royal blood on
 earth. Be resoun^e þat þe Romaines whare so ryche holdene,
 As of þe realeste blode þat reynede in erthe.
- Boar's-heads
 there were served
 upon silver by
 numerous gaily
 dressed attend-
 ants. 176 There come in at þe fyrste course, befor þe kyng^e selvene,
 Barehevedys þat ware bryghte, burnyste *with* sylver,
 Alle *with* taghte mene and towne in togers fulle ryche,
 Of saunke reale in suyte, sixty at ones ;
- Venison, fatted
 and wild, with
 choice bread, 180 flesch fluriste of fermysone *with* frumentee noble
 Ther-to wylde to wale, and wynlyche bryddes,¹

¹ *bredes* erased and *bryddes* written in margin.

- Pacockes and plovers in platers of golde,
 Pygges of porke despyne, *pat* pastureded never ;
- 184 Sythene herons in hedoyne, hyled fulle faire ;
 Grett swannes fulle swythe in silveryne chargeours,
 Tartes of Turkey, taste whane þeme lykys ;
 Gumbaldes graythely, fulle gracious to taste ;
- 188 Seyne bowes of wylde bores with þe braune lechyde,
 Bernakes and botures in baterde dysches,
 þareby braunchers in brede bettyr was never,
 With brestez of barowes, *pat* bryghte ware to schewe,
- 192 Seyne come þer sewes sere, with solace þer-after,
 Ownd of azure alle over and ardant þem semyde,
 Of ilke aleche þe lowe launschide fulle hye,
pat alle ledes myghte lyke *pat* lukyde þeme apone ;
- 196 þane cranes and curlues craftyly roasted,
 Connygez in cretoyne colourede fulle faire,
 fesauntez enflureschit in flammande silver,
 With darielles endordide, and daynteez ynewe ;
- 200 þane clarett and Crette, clergyally rennene,
 With condethes fulle curious alle of clene silvyre ;
 Osay and algarde, and oþer ynewe,
 Rynisch wyne and Rochelle, richere was never ;
- 204 Vernage of Venyce vertuouse and Crete ;
 In faucetez of fyne golde, fonode whoso lykys ;
 The kynggez cope-borde was closed in silver,
 In grete goblettez overgylte glorious of hewe ;
- 208 There was a cheeffe buttlere, a chevalere noble,
 Sir Cayous þe curtaise, *pat* of þe cowpe servede ;
 Sixty cowpes of suyte offore the kyng selvyne,
 Crafty and curious corvene fulle faire,
- 212 In ever-ilk aperty pyghte with precyous stones,
 That nane enpoysoned sulde goo prevely þer undyre,
 Bot þe bryght golde for brethe sulde briste alto pees,
 Or ells þe venyme sulde voyde thurghe vertue of þe stones,
- 216 And the conquerour hymselfene, so clenly arayede
 In colours of clene golde, cleede wyth his knyghttys,
- peacocks and plovers upon golden plates, sucking pigs, herons in sauce, huge swans, tarts and conserves,
- hams and brawn in slices, wild geese and ducks, young hawks,
- various stews and made dishes ornamented brightly,
- Cranes and curlews roasted, rabbits served in sweet sauce, pheasants upon silver, curries made to shine bright, and numerous other dainties. Wine caused to run skilfully in silver conduits.
- Rare sorts served in cups of fine gold. The King's cupboard was glorious with plate.
- The chief butler was Sir Cayous,
- who served the wine in goblets decked with precious stones, which hinder the deadly effects of poison.
- Arthur was clad in cloth of gold

with his crown
on; the doughti-
est knight that
dwelt on earth.
Then he spake
courteous words
to those lords.

"Sirs, be of good
cheer, we give
you the best our
barren country
affords, which in-
deed is but
poor."

"Sir," says the
Senator, "Rome
itself can show
nothing equal to
this luxurious
feast."

Then they wash-
ed and withdrew
to the chamber.

Sir Gawaine leads
Guinevere.

Spiced drinks
were served to
all.

Certain lords
were assigned to
attend upon the
Senator.

Arthur goes to
council in the
Giant's tower,

with his lords,
justices, judges,
and gentle
knights.

First speaks Sir
Cador of Corn-
wall.

The letters of Sir
Lucius, he says,
delight his heart.

Drissid *with* his dyademe one his deesse ryche,
ffore he was demyde þe doughtyeste þat duellyde in erthe.

220 Thane þe conquerour kyndly carpede to þose lordes,
Rehetede þe Romaines *with* realle speche,

"Sirs, bez knyghtly of contenance, *and* comfurthes
þourselvynes,

We knowe noghte in þis countre of curious metez ;

224 In thees barayne landez, bredes none oþer,
ffore-thy wythowttyne feynyng, enforce þow þe more
To feede þow *with* syche feble as þe be-fore fynde."

"Sir," sais þe Senatour, "so Criste motte me helpe !

228 There rygnede never syche realtee *with-in* Rome walles !
There ne es prelatte ne pape, ne prynce in þis erthe,
That ne he myghte be wele payede of þees pryce metes !"

A ftyre theyre welthe þey wesche, *and* went un-to
chambyre,

232 þis ilke kydde conquerour *with* knyghtes ynewe ;
Sir Gaywayne þe worthye Dame Waynour he hledys ;
Sir Owghtreth on þe toþer syde of Turry was lorde.
Thane spyces unsparly þay spendyde there-aftyre,

236 Malvesye *and* muskadelle, þase mervelyous drynkes,
Raykede fulle raythely in rossete cowpes,
Tille alle þe riche on rawe, Romaines *and* oþer.

Bot the soveraigne sothely, for solauce of hym selvene,

240 Assignyde to þe senatour certaygne lordes,
To lede to his levere, whene he leve askes,
With myrthe *and* *with* melodye of mynstralsy noble.

Thane þe conquerour to concelle cayres there aftyre,

244 Wyth lordes of his lygeaunce þat to hymselfe langys ;
To þe geauntes toure jolily he wendes,
Wyth justicez *and* juggez, and gentille knyghtes.

Sir Cador of Cornewayle to þe kyngē carppes,

248 Lughe one hyme luffly *with* lykande lates ;

"I thanke Gode of þat thraa þat us þus thretys !

þow moste be traylede, I trowe, bot þife þe trett bettyre :
þe lettres of syr Lucius lyghttys myne herte !

- 252 We hafe as losels liffyde many longe daye,
 Wyth delyttes in this land *with* lordchipez many,
 And forelytenede the loos þat we are layttede :
 I was abaischite, be oure Lorde, of oure beste bernes,
- 256 Fore gret dule of deffuse of dedez of armes!
 Now wakkenyse þe were! wyrchipide be Cryste!
 And wesallewynne it agayne be wyghtnesse and strenghe!"
 "Sir Cador," *quod* þe kyng, "thy concelle es noble,
- 260 Bot þou arte a mervailous mane *with* thi mery wordez!
 ffor thow countez no caas, ne castes no forthire,
 Bot hurles furthe appone hevede, as thi herte thynkes;
 I moste trette of a trew towchande þise nedes,
- 264 Talke of thies tythdands þat tenes myne herte;
 þou sees þat þe Emperour es angerde a lyttill;
 þat semes be his sandismene þat he es sore grevede;
 His senatour has sommonde me, and said what hym lykyde,
- 268 Hethely in my halle, wyth heynþous wordes,
 In speche dissypsyede me, *and* sparede me lyttill;
 I myght noghte speke for spytte, so my herte trymblyde!
 He askyde me tyrauntly tribute of Rome,
- 272 That tenefully tynt was in tyme of myne elders;
 There alyenes, in absence of alle mene of armes,
 Coverd it of commons, as cronicles telles;
 I have tide to take tribute of Rome,
- 276 Myne ancestres ware emperours, and aughte it þeme selvene,
 Belyne *and* Bremyne, *and* Bawdewyne the thyردة,
 They occupyede þe empyre aughte score wynnttyrs,
 Ilkane ayere aftyre oþer, as awlde mene telles;
- 280 Thei coverde þe capitoile, and keste doune þe walles;
 Hyngede of þeire heddys-mene by hundrethes at ones;
 Seyne Constantyne, our kynsmane, conquerid it aftyre,
 þat ayere was of Ynglande, and Emperour of Rome,¹
- They had too long
 lived a life of
 inglorious peace.
- He rejoices to
 return again to
 deeds of arms.
- The king praises
 Sir Cador for his
 bold words,
- spoken from his
 heart without
 thought or care.
- He himself is
 grieved at these
 tidings.
- he has been in-
 sulted in his own
 hall by heinous
 words,
- and insolently
 summoned to
 pay tribute to
 the Emperor of
 Rome,
- of whom he ought
 rather to demand
 tribute.
- His ancestors oc-
 cupied the Em-
 pire of Rome
 eight score win-
 ters.
- His kinsman,
 Constantine,
 afterwards sub-
 dued it—

¹ "For the Emperor Constantine
 That was the son of Elyne
 That was a Bretone of this lond,
 Conquered Rome with his hond."

—*Arthur* (ed. F. J. Furnivall), l. 249.

he who gained
by conquest the
true Cross.

284 He þat conquerid þe Crosse be craftez of armes,
That Criste was on crucifiede, þat kyng es of hevene;
Thus hafe we evydens to aske þe Emperour þe same,
That þus regnez at Rome, whate ryghte þat he claymes."

Then answered
King Aungers
and said that Ar-
thur ought to be
supreme over all
kings.

288 **T**han¹ answard e kyng Aungers to Arthure hym selvyne,
"Thow aughte to be overlynge over alle oþer kynges,
ffore wyseste, and worthyeste, and wyghteste of haundes,
The knyghtlyeste of counsaile þat ever corone bare;

The Romans had
done many evil
deeds in Scot-
land,

292 I dare saye fore Scottlande, þat we them schathe lympe,
Whene the Romaynes regnede, þay raunsounde oure eldys,
And rade in theire ryotte, and ravyschett oure wyfes,
With-owttyne resone or ryghte refte us oure gudes;

for which he
would have re-
venge.

296 And I salle make myne avowe devotly to Criste,
And to þe haly vernacle vertuus and noble,
Of this grett velany I salle be vengede ones
On þone venemus mene, wyth valiant knyghtes!

He promises to
bring 50,000 men
to aid Arthur.

300 I salle the forthire of defence fosterde ynewe
fifty thowsande mene, wyth-in two eldes,
Of my wage for to wende, whare so the lykes,
To fyghte wyth thy ffaa mene, þat us unfaire ledes."

The Baron of
little Britain
would have Ar-
thur return a
fierce answer.

304 **T**hane the burelyche beryne of Bretayne þe lyttyle
Counsayles syr Arthure, and of hyme besekys
To ansuere þe alyenes wyth austere wordes,
To entyce the Emperour to take overe the mounttes.

He fears the Ro-
mans no whit.

308 He said, "I make myne avowe verreilly to Cryste,
And to þe haly vernacle, þat voide schalle I nevere,
ffor radnesse of na Romayne þat regnes in erthe;
Bot ay be redye in araye, and at areste ffoundene,

312 No more dowte the dynte of theire derfe wapyns,
þan þe dewe þat es dannke, whene þat it doune ffallles;
Ne no more schoune fore þe swape of theire scharpe
suerddes,

Then fore þe faireste flour þatt on the folde growes!

He promises to
bring 30,000

316 I salle to batelle the brynge, of brenyede knyghtes
Thyrtyt thosaunde be tale, thryfty e in armes,

¹ *Yan* in MS.

- Wyth-in a monethe daye in-to whatte marche,
 þat þow wyll sothelye assygne, whene thyselſe lykes.”
- 320 “A! A!” sais þe Walsche kyng, “wirchipid be Criste! Then Arthur ex-
 Now schalle we wreke fullē wele þe wrethe of oure elders! claims Ah! Ah!
 In West Walys i-wysse syche woundyrs-þay wroghte, Now shall we
 þat allē for wandrethe may wepe, þat one þat were thynkes. have revenge.
- 324 I sallē have the avanttwarde wytterly my selvenē,
 Tylle þat I have venquiste þe Vicounte of Rome,
 þat wroghte me at Viterbe a velanye ones,
 As I paste in pylgremage by the Pounte Tremble; Hehimself would
 fight at the head
 of his army till
 he had revenged
 himself on the
 Viscount of Rome
 for a villainy he
 once wrought
 him at Viterbo.
- 328 He was in Tuskayne þat tyme and tuke of oure knyghttes,
 Areste theme oonryghttwyslye, and raunsound þame aftyre;
 I sallē hym surelye ensure, þat saghetylle sallē we never,
 Are we sadlye assemble by oure selfenē ones,
- 332 And dele dynttys of dethe with oure derſe wapyns!
 And I sallē wagge to þat were of wyrchipfullē knyghtes, He would take
 Of Wyghte and of Walschelande, and of þe Weste marches, two thousand
 Twa thosande in tale, horsede one stedys, picked knights.
- 336 of þe wyghteste wyes in alle þone Weste landys!”
 Syre Ewane fytz Uryencee þane egerly fraynez,
 Was cosyne to þe conquerour, corageous hym selfene,
 “Sir, and we wyste þour wyllē, we walde wirke þer-aftyre; Then spoke Sir
 Ewayne and said
 that they would
 all follow his
 command gladly.
- 340 ȝif þis journee sulde halde, or be arouede¹ forthyre,
 To ryde one þone Romaynes and ryott theire landez,
 We walde schape us there-fore to schippe whene þow
 lykys.”
- “Cosyne,” quod þe conquerour, “kyndly þou asches; Then said Ar-
 thur,
- 344 ȝife my concelle accorde to conquere þone landez,
 By the kalendez of Juny we schalle encountre ones,
 Wyth fullē creuelle knyghtez, so Cryste mot me helpe!
 There-to make I myne avowe devottly to Cryste,
 “We will be
 ready by the ka-
 lends of June,
- 348 And to the holy vernacle vertuous and noble,
 I sallē at Lammesse take leve, to lenge at my large
 In Lorayne or Lumberdye, whethire me leve thynkys; and at Lammās
 will enjoy our-
 selves in Lorraine
 or Lombardy.

¹ The reading of this word is somewhat doubtful. Halliwell reads *aprovede*, but there is certainly no trace of a *p* in the MS.

Sojourn six
weeks in the
Vale of Viterbo,

and advanceskir-
mishers to Rome
unless they offer
peace in fitting
time."

Then Sir Ewayne
vows vengeance
against the Em-
peror of Rome
for occupying Ar-
thur's heritage,

and promises
50,000 men on
fair steeds.

Then Lancelot
declares his satis-
faction at the
war.

He is ready to
joust with the
Emperor him-
self,

and to carry the
war into Rome.

Sir Lottez laughs
for joy,

- Merke un-to Meloyne, and myne doune þe wallez,
 352 Bathe of Petyrsande, *and* of Pys, and of þe Pounte Trëble,
 In þe Vale of Viterbe vetaile my knyghttes,
 Suggourne there sex wokes *and* solace my-selfene;
 Send *prekers* to þe price tounne, and plaunte there my segge,
 356 Bot if þay profre me þe pece be processe of tyme."
 "Certys," sais *syr* Ewayne, "and I avowe aftyre,
 And I þat hathelle may see ever with myne eghne,
 That ocupies thine heritage, the empyere of Rome,
 360 I salle auntyre me anes hys egle to touche,
 þat borne es in his banere of brighte golde ryche,
 And raas it frome his riche mene, and ryste it in sondyre,
 Bot he be redily reschowede with riotous knyghtez;
 364 I salle enforssse þowe in þe felde with fresche mene of armes,
 ffyfty thosande folke apone faire stedys,
 On thi ffoo mene to foonde there the faire thynkes,
 In ffraunce *or* in ffriselande, feghte whene þe lykes!"
 368 "By oure Lorde," *quod* *syr* Launcelott, now lyghttys
 myne herte!
 I love Gode of þis love þis lordes has avowede!
 Nowe may lesse mene have leve to say what theme lykes,
 And hase no lettyng be lawe, bot lystynnys þise wordez;
 372 I salle be at journee with gentille knyghtes,
 On a ramby stede fulle jolyly graythide,
 Or any journee begane to juste with hym selfene,
 Emange alle his geauntez genyvers and oþer,
 376 Stryke hym styfflye fro his stede, with strenghe of myne
 handys,
 ffor alle þa steryne in stour, þat in his stale hovys!
 Be my retenu arayede, I rekke bot a lyttille
 To make rowtte into Rome, with ryotous knyghtes!
 380 With-in a sevenyghte daye, with sex score helmes,
 I salle be seene on the see, saile when þe lykes."
 Thane laughs *syr* Lottez, and alle one lowde meles,
 "Me likez þat *syr* Lucius launges aftyre sorowe;
 384 Now he wylnez þe were, hys wandrethe begynnys,

- It es owre weredes to wreke the wrethe of oure elders !
 I make myne avowe to Gode, and to þe holy vernacle,
 And I may se þe Romaynes, þat are so ryche haldene,
 388 Arayed in þeire riotes on a rounde felde,
 I salle at þe reverence of þe rounde table.
 Ryde throughte alle þe rowtte, rerewarde and oþer,
 Redy wayes to make, and renkkes fullø rowme,
 392 Rynnande on rede blode, as my stede ruschez !
 He þat folowes my fare, and fyrste commes aftyre,
 Sallø fynde in my fare waye many ffay levyde !”
 Thane þe conquerour kyndly comforthes þese knyghtes,
 396 Alowes þame gretly theire lordly a-vowes,—
 “ Alweldande Gode, wyrchip þow alle !
 And latte me nevere wannthe þow, whylls I in werlde regne ;
 My menske and my manhede þe mayntene in erthe,
 400 Myne honour alle owt utterly in oþer kyngys landes ;
 My wele and my wyrchiþe, of alle þis werlde ryche,
 þe have knyghtly conqueryde, þat to my coroune langes ;
 Hym thare be ferde for no faeces, þat swylke a folke ledes,
 404 Bot ever ffresche for to fyghte, in felde whene hym lykes.
 I acounte no kynge þat undyr Criste lyffes,
 Whilles I see þowe alle sounde, I sette be no more.”
Qwhene they tristily had tretyd, thay trumppede up
 aftyre,
 408 Descendyd doune with a daunce of dukes and erles ;
 Thane þey semblede to sale, and sowpped als swythe,
 Alle þis semly sorte, wyth semblante fullø noble.
 Thene the roy reallø rehetes thes knyghttys,
 412 Wyth reverence and ryotte of alle his rounde table,
 Tille seven dayes was gone : þe senatour askes
 Answer to þe Emperour with austeryne wordez,
 Aftyre þe Epiphanye, whene þe purpos was takyne
 416 Of peris of þe parlement, prelates and oþer.
 The kyng in his concelle, curtaise and noblee,
 Utters þe alienes, and ansuers hyme selvene :—
 “ Gret wele Lucius, thi lorde, and layne noghte þise wordes ;

and hopes to see
the rich Romans
in their pomp,

that he may cut
his way through
them and shed
their blood.

Then Arthur
praises his
knights for up-
holding his
honour.

While they re-
main true to him
he fears no king
on earth.
Then the Council
broke up.

Music and
dancing suc-
ceeded,

and they all were
feasted in the
hall.

After seven days
the Senator de-
mands his answer
for the Emperor.

Then Arthur bids
him greet Lucius

- and tell him that 420 Ife þow be lygmane lele, late hyme wiet sone
 he shall quickly
 see hin in his
 country;
- that he will hold 424 By þe reyvere of Reone halde my rounde table,
 his round table
 by the river
 Rhone,
- and mine down 428 To Meloyne the mervaylous, and myne doune the walles;
 the walls of
 Milan,
- ravage Tuscany
 with his fierce
 knights, 432 Ryde alle þas rowme landes wyth ryotous knyghttes;
 Byde hy[m] make reschewes for menske of hyme selvene,
 And mette me fore his manhede in þase mayne landes!
 I salle be foundyne in Fraunce, fraiste whene hym lykes,
- and before seven 436 The fyrste daye of feveryere, in thas faire marches!
 winters are gone
 besiege Rome,
- and many a sen- 440 To seege þe cetee of Rome wyth-in seven wyntyre,
 ator shall rue his
 wrath.
- The messenger 444 Of cundit and credense, kayre whene the lykes:
 may depart as
 soon as he
 pleases.
- He must travel
 to Sandwich in
 seven days, 448 Sixty myle on a daye, þe somme es bott lyttille!
 Thowe moste spede at the spurs, and spare noghte thi fole,
 Thowe weynde by Watlyng-strette, and by no waye ells:
 Thare thow nyghttes one nyghte, nede moste þou lenge,
- going by Wat-
 ling-street,
 stopping at night
 wherever he may
 chance to be,
 tying his horse
 to a bush by the
 bridle. 452 Be it foreste or felde, found þou no forthire;
 Bynde thy blonke by a buske with thy brydille evene,
 Lugge þi-selfe undyre lynde, as þe leefe thynkes,

- There awes none alyenes to ayere appone nyghttys,
 456 With syche a rebawdous rowtte to ryot thy selvene.
 Thy lycence es lemete in presence of lordys,
 Be now lathe or lette, ryghte as þe thynkes,
 For bothe þi lyffe and thi lyme lygges þer-appone,
 460 þose *syr* Lucius had laide þe lordchipe of Rome;
 ffor be þow foundene a fute with-owte þe flode merkes,
 Aftyr þe aughtende day, whene undroune es rungene,
 þou salle be hevedede in hye, and with horsse drawene,
 464 And seyne heylly be hangede, houndes to gnawene!
 The rente ne rede golde, þat un-to Rome langes,
 Salle y noghte redily renke, raunsonne thyne one!"
 "Sir," sais the senatour, "so Crist mot me helpe!"
 468 Might I with wirchip wyne awaye ones,
 I sulde never fore emperour, þat on erthe lenges,
 Ofte unto Arthure ayere one syche nedys;
 Bot I am sengilly here, with sex sum of knyghtes;
 472 I be-seke þow, *syr*, that we may sounde passe:
 If any unlawefulle lede lette us by þe waye,
 With-in thy lycence, lorde, thy loosse es enpeyrede."
 "Care noghte," *quod* the kyng, "thy coundyte es knawene
 476 ffor Carlelele to þe coste, there thy cogge lengges;
 þoghe thy cofers ware fulle, cramede with sylver,
 Thow myghte be sekyre of my sele sixty myle forthire."
 They enclined to þe kyng, and counge þay askede,
 480 Cayers owtt of Carelele, *catchez* one theire horsez;
 Sir Cadore þe curtayes kende theme the wayes,
 To Catrike þeme cunvayede, and to Crist þeme be-kennyde.
 So þey spede at þe spoures, þey sprangene þeire horses,
 484 Hyres þeme hakenayes hastyly þere aftyre;
 So fore reddour þey redene, and risted theme never,
 Bot if they luggede undire lynd, whills þeme lyghte failede;
 Bot evere þe senatour for-sothe soghte at þe gayneste,
 488 By þe sevende day was gone þe cetee þai reehide;
 Of alle þe glee undire Gode so glade ware þey nevere,
 As of þe sounde of þe see and Sandwyche belles!

If after the evening of the eighth day he is found in the country, he shall be hanged up for dogs to eat.

Then the Senator declares that if he can only get well away once, he would never again go on such an errand.

He prays that his retinue may be protected on their way.

Then Arthur tells him that if his coffers were crammed full of silver he would be safe with his passport.

Then did the Romans depart with all speed,

and never rested till they had reached Sandwich by the time prescribed.

Never were they as glad of any thing as of the sound of the sea and Sandwich bells.

Wythowttyne more stowuntynge they schippide þeire
horsez,

They crossed the
sea to Flanders,

- 492 Wery to þe wane see þey went alle att ones ;
With þe mene of þe walle they weyde up þeire ankys,
And fiede at þe fore flude, in Flaundrez þey rowede,
And thorughe Flaundres þey founde, as þeme faire thoghte,¹

and over Mount
St. Gothard into
Lombardy,

- 496 Tille Akyne in Almayne, in Arthur landes ;
Gosse by þe Mount Goddarde fulle grevous wayes,
And so in-to Lumberddye lykande to schewe ;
They turne thurgh Tuskayne, with towres fulle heghe,

through Tuscany
to Rome.

- 500 In pris appairelles theme in *precious* wedez ;
The sevendaye in suters þay suggourne þeire horsez,
And sekes þe Seyntez of Rome, be assente of knyghtes ;
Sythyne prekes to þe pales with portes so ryche,

Then the Senator
seeks an audience
with the Emperor
Lucius.

- 504 þare *syr* Lucius lenges with lordes enowe ;
Lowttes to hym luffly, and lettres hym bedes
Of credence enclosyde, with knyghtlyche wordez.

Who asks eagerly
for Arthur's an-
swer, and on what
ground he resists
the power of
Rome.

- Thene the emperour was egree, and enkerly fraynes
508 þe answeere of Arthure ; he askes hym sone
How he arayes þe rewme, and rewlys þe pople ;
ȝif he be rebelle to Rome, whate ryghte þat he claymes :

His ambassador
ought to have
seized his sceptre
and sat above
him.

Arthur, he says,
ought himself to
have served the
Senator.

Then answers the
Senator, that Ar-
thur is too great
to do that for
anyone.

- “Thow sulde his ceptre have sesede, and syttyne aboune,
512 ffor reverence and realtee of Rome þe noble :

By sertes þow was my sandes, and senatour of Rome,
He sulde fore solempnitee hafe *serve*de þe hym selvene.”

“That wille he never for no waye of alle þis werlde ryche,

- 516 **T** Bot who may wynne hym of werre, by wyghtnesse
of handes ;²

Many fey schalle be fyrste appone þe felde levyde,
Are he appere in this place, profre whene þe likes :
I saye the *syr* Arthure es thyne enmye fore ever,

He claims no less
than the Empire
of Rome.

- 520 And ettelles to bee overlynge of þe empyre of Rome,
That alle his ancestres aughte, bot Utere hym-selfe.

¹ *likyd* written first in MS. but erased and *thoghte* written in margin by same hand.

² In the short romance of Arthur, the Senator is still more plain-spoken,
“His worthiness, Sir Emperor,
Passes much all youre.”—l. 286.

- Thy nedes this newe zere, I notified my-selfene,
 Be-fore þat noble of name *and* neyvesome of kynges ;
- 524 In the moste reale place of þe rounde table,
 I somounde hyme solempnylye, one secande his knyghtez ;
 Sene I was formyde in faythe so ferde was I nevere,
 In alle þe placez ther I passede of prynce in erthe !
- 528 I wolde fore-sake alle my suyte of segnowry of Rome,
 Or I este to þat soveraygne whare sente one suyche nedes !
 He may be chosyne cheftayne, cheefe of alle oþer,
 Bathe be chauncez of armes and chevallrye noble,
- 532 ffor whyeseste *and* worthyeste, and wyghteste of haunde :
 Of alle the wyes þate I watte in this werlde ryche,
 The knyghtlyeste creatoure in Cristyndome haldene,
 Of kyng or of conquerour, crownde in erthe,
- 536 Of countenaunce of corage, of crewelle lates,
 The comlyeste of knyghtehode þat undyre Cryste lyffes !
 He maye be spokene in dyspens, despysere of sylvere,
 That no more of golde gyffes þane of grette stones,
- 540 No more of wyne þane of watyre, that of þe welle rynnys,
 Ne of welthe of þ[i]s werlde bot wyrchipe allone.
 Syche contenaunce was never knowene in no kythe ryche,
 As was with þat counquerour in his courte haldene ;
- 544 I countede at this Crystynmesse, of kynges enoyntede,
 Hole tene at his table, þat tyme with hyme selfene ;
 He wylle werraye i-wysse, be-ware ȝif þe lykys,
 Wage many wyghtemene, and wache thy marches,
- 548 That they be redye in araye, and at areste foundyne ;
 ffor ȝife he reche un-to Rome, he raunsouns it for evere !
 I rede þow dreste the þer-fore, and drawe no lytte langere,
 To sekyre of þi sowdeours, and send to þe mowntes ;
- 552 Be þe quartere of this zere, and hym quarte staunde,
 He wylle wyghtlye in a qwhyle one his wayes hye.”
- “Bee Estyre,” sais þe Emperour, “I ettylle my selfene,
 To hostaye in Almayne with armede knyghtez ;
- 556 Sende freklye into Fraunce, þat flour es of rewmes,
 ffade to fette þat freke, and forfette his landez ;

He tells the Em-
 peror how he
 had delivered his
 message,
 and that he was
 never so fright-
 ened since he was
 born.

Arthur is worthy
 to be king of men
 for his wisdom
 and valour.

He is the most
 famous knight in
 Christendom.

To him gold and
 silver are as no-
 thing,

and wine no more
 than water.

Ten kings anoint-
 ed feast at his
 table.

God need is
 there of zealous
 preparation,

and that soldiers
 should be dis-
 patched to the
 mountains forth-
 with.

“By Easter,” says
 the Emperor, “I
 undertake to be
 in Germany with
 an army,

and will send
many giants and
mighty men to
meet him in the
mountains.

ffor I salle sette kepers, fullè covaunde *and* noble,
Many geaunte of geene, justers fullè gude,

- 560 To mete hym in the mountes, *and* martyre hys knyghtes,
Stryke þeme doune in strates, and struye theme fore evere,
There salle appone Godarde a garette be rerede,
That schalle be garneschte *and* kepyde *with* gude mene of
armes,

A post shall be
occupied on
Mount St. Goth-
ard, with a beacon
ready to light,

- 564 And a bekynne above ne to brynne whene þeme lykys,
þat nane enmye *with* hoste salle entre the mountes ;
There schalle one mounte Bernarde be beyldede anopere,
Buschede with banerettes and bachelers noble :

and another on
Mount St. Bern-
nard.

He shall not be
suffered to enter
Pavia."

- 568 In at the portes of Payve schalle no prynce passe,
Thurgh the perelous places, for my pris knyghtes."

Then Lucius
sends letters into
the East,

Thane *syr* Lucius lordlyche lettres he sendys
Onone in-to þe Oryente, with austeryne knyghtez,

- 572 Tille Ambyganye and Orcage, and Alysaundyre eke,
To Inde and to Ermonyne, as Ewfrates rynnys,
To Asye, and to Affrike, and Ewrope þe large,
To Irritayne and Elamet, and alle þase owte ilez ;

- 576 To Arraby and Egipt, tille erles and oþer,
That any erthe occupyes in þase Este marches ;
Of Damaske and Damyat, and dukes and erles,
ffor drede of his daungere they dresside þeme sone ;

to demand aid of
all the kings and
lords.
Quickly they all
came, for fear of
his might.

- 580 Of Crete and of Capados the honourable kyngys
Come at his commandmente, clenly at ones ;
To Tartary *and* Turkey, whene tythynggez es comene,
They turne in by Thebay terauntez fullè hugge,

- 584 The flour of þe faire folke, of Amazonnes landes ;
Alle thate ffaillez on þe felde be forfeite fore evere !
Of Babyloyne and Baldake the burlyche knyghtes,
Bayous *with* þeire baronage bydez no langere ;

All that failed
were to forfeit
their lands.

- 588 Of Perce and of Pamphile, and Preter Johnne landes,
Iche prynce *with* his powere appertlyche graythede ;
The Sowdane of Surrye assemblez his knyghtes,
ffra Nylus to Nazareth, nommers fullè huge ;

- 592 To Garyere *and* to Galelé þey gedyre alle at ones ;

- The Sowdanes that ware sekyre sowdeours to Rome,
 They gadyrede overe þe Grekkes see with grevous wapyns,
 In theire grete galays, wyth gleterande scheldez ;
- 596 The kynge of Cyprys one þe see þe Sowdane habydes,
 With alle the realles of Roodes, arayede with hyme one :
 They sailede with a syde wynde ovre þe salte strandez :
 Sodanly þe Sarezenes, as theme selfe lykede,
- 600 Craftyly at Cornett the kynges are aryese,de,
 fra þe ceté of Rome sexti myle large :
 Be that the Grekes ware graythede, a fulle gret nombyre,
 The myghtyeste of Macedone, with mene of þa marches,
- 604 Pulle and Pruyslande presses with oper,
 The lege-mene of Lettow with legyons ynewe :
 Thus they semble in sortes, summes fulle huge,
 Sowdanes and Sarezenes owt of sere landes,
- 608 The Sowdane of Surry and sextene kynges,
 At the cetes of Rome assemblede at ones.
- T**hane yschewes þe Emperour armede at ryghtys,
 Arayede with his Romaynes appone ryche stedys ;
- 612 Sixty geauntes be-fore engenderide with fendez,
 With weches and warlaws to wacchene his tentys ;
 Ay-ware whare he wendes, wyntrez and zeres.
 Myghte no blonkes theme bere, thos bustous churles,
- 616 Bot coverde camellez of toures, enclosyde in maylez ;
 He ayerez oute with alyenez osten fulle huge,
 Ewyne in-to Almayne, þat Arthure hade wonnyne ;
 Rydes in by þe ryvere, and ryottez hyme selvene,
- 620 And ayeres with a huge wylle alle þas hye landez ;
 Alle Westwale of werre he wynnys as hym lykes,
 Drawes in by Danuby, and dubbez hys knyghtez ;
 In the contré of Colome castelles enseggez,
- 624 And suggeournez þat sesone wyth Sarazenes ynewe.
- A**t the utas of Hillary, Syr Arthure hym-selvene
 In his kydde councele commande þe lordes,—
 “ Kayere to þour cuntrez, and semble þour knyghtes,
- 628 And kepys me at Constantyne clenlyche arayede ;

From all the East
 they came sailing
 across the Greek
 Sea in their
 mighty ships
 armed for war,

and assembled at
 Civita, sixty miles
 from Rome.

There were of
 Greeks a vast
 number, and men
 of Italy, with
 Saracens from
 many lands.

Then goes forth
 the Emperor with
 his knights.

Sixty giants born
 of fiends, and
 witches and war-
 locks precede
 him.

Riding upon
 camels bearing
 towers,

he marches into
 Germany, and
 lays it waste.

Meanwhile Ar-
 thur commands
 his knights to
 gather their
 forces, and to be
 ready to meet
 him.

Byddez me at Gareflete apone þa blythe stremes,
 Baldly *with-in* borde *with* þowre beste beryns;
 I schalle menskfully þowe mete in thos faire marches."

The fleet assem-
 bles at Sandwich.

632 He sendez furthe sodaynly *sergeantes* of armes,
 To alle hys mariners on rawe, to areste hym schippys;
 Wyth-in sextene dayes hys fleet whas assemblede,
 At Sandewyche on þe see, saile whene hym lykes.

He holds a Par-
 liament at Yorke,

636 In the palez of þorke a perlement he haldez,
With alle þe perez of þe rewme, *prelates* and *oper*;
 And aftyre þe *prechyng*e in presence of lordes,
 The kyng in his concelle carpys þes wordes,—

640 "I am in *purpos* to passe *perilous* wayes,
 To kaire *with* my kene mene, to conquere þone landes,
 To owtraye myne enmy, þif aventure it schewe,
 That occupyes myne heritage, þe empyre of Rome.

and appoints as
 Viceroy Sir Mor-
 dred, his nephew.

644 I sett þow here a soveraynge, ascente þif þowe lykys,
 That es me sybb, my *syster sone*, Sir Mordrede hym selvene,
 Salle be my levetenante, *with* lordchipez ynewe,
 Of alle my lele lege-mene, þat my landez þemes."

648 He carpes tille his cosyne þane, in counsaile hym selvene,—
 "I make the kepare, *syr* knyghte, of kyngrykes manye,
 Wardayne wyrchipulle, to weilde al my landes,
 That I have wonnene of werre, in alle þis werlde ryche;

He bids him take
 care of Queen
 Guinever.

652 I wyll þat Waynour, my weife, in wyrchipe be holdene,
 That hire waunte noo wele, ne welthe þat hire lykes;
 Luke my kydde castells be clenlyche arrayede,

and of his castles
 and forests.

Thère cho maye suggourne hire-selfe, wyth semlyche
 berynes.

The Queen alone
 is allowed to hunt
 in his absence.

656 ffaunde my fforestez be ffrythede, o frenchepe for evere,
 That nane werreye my wylde, botte Waynour hir selvene,
 And þat in þe sesone whene grees es assignyde,
 That cho take hir solauce in certayne tymes

All officers are
 to be completely
 under his com-
 mand.

660 Chauncelere and chambyrleyne chaunge as þe lykes,
 Audytours and offycers ordayne thy selvene,—
 Bathe jureez, and juggez, and justicez of landes,
 Luke thow justyfyfe them wele that injurye wyrkes:

- 664 If me be destaynede to dye at Dryghtyns wylle,
 I charge the my sektour, cheffe of alle oper,
 To mynystre my mobles, fore mode of my saule,
 To mendynnantez and mysese in myschefe fallene :
- 668 Take here my testament of tresoure fullé huge,
 As I trayste appone the, be traye thowe me never !
 As þow wille answe're be-fore the austeryne jugge,
 That alle þis werlde wynly wysse as hyme lykys,
- 672 Luke þat my laste wylle be lelely perfourmede !
 Thow has clenly þe cure that to my coroune langez,
 Of alle my werdez wele, and my weyffe eke ;
 Luke þowe kepe the so clere, there be no cause fondene,
- 676 Whene I to contré come, if Cryste wille it thole,
 And thow have grace gudly to governe thy selvene,
 I salle coroune þe knyghte kyng with my handez.”
- Than¹ syr Modrede fullé myldly meles hym selvene,
 680 Knelyd to þe conquerour, and carpes þise wordez,—
 “ I be-seke þow, syr, as my sybbe lorde,
 þat ȝe wille for charyté cheese þow anoþer ;
 ffor if ȝe putte me in þis plytte, þowre pople es dyssavyde ;
- 684 To presente a prynce astate my powere es symple :
 Whene oper of werre wysse are wyrchipide here-aftyre,
 Thane may I forsothe be sette bott at lyttillé.
 To passe in þour presance my purpos es takyne,
- 688 And allé my purveaunce apperte fore my pris knyghtez.”
 “ Thowe arte my newewe fullé nere, my nurree of olde,
 That I have chastyede and chosene, a childe of my chambyre;
 ffor the sybredyne of me, fore-sake noghte þis offyce
- 692 That thow ne wyrk my wille, thow whatte watte it menes.”
 Nowe he takez hys leve, and lengez no langere,
 At lordez, at lege-mene, þat leves hyme byhyndene.
 And seyne þat worthilyche wy went un-to chambyre,
- 696 ffor to comfurthe þe qwene, þat in care lenges ;
 Waynour waykly wepande hym kyssiz,
 Talkez to hym tenderly with teres ynewe,—
 “ I may wery the wye, that this werre movede,

If Arthur dies
 Mordred is
 succeed him.

He bids him be
 faithful to his
 trust,

and promises to
 crown him king
 if he remain so.

[¹ *Yan* in MS.]

But Mordred de-
 sires to be ex-
 cused,

and would rather
 go to the war.

But Arthur bade
 him, as his near-
 est of kin, to
 undertake the
 office.

Then Arthur
 takes leave of
 his Queen.

Guineverlaments
 his departure,

and would rather
die in his arms.

But Arthur bids
her not to grieve,

and tells her that
he has made Mor-
dred, a knight
of her own, his
deputy.

Then he kisses
the ladies, and
takes leave of
them.

But Guinever
swooned when
he asked for his
sword.

The king then
departs hastily
with his knights.

At Sandwich all
the lords and
their followers
assemble.

Horses, arms,
tents, clothing,
and provisions
are shipped.

- 700 That warnes me wyrchippe of my wedde lorde ;
Alle my lykyngē of lyfe owte of lande wendez,
And I in langour am leste, leve ȝe for evere !
Schyne myghte I, dere lufe, dye in ȝour armes,
- 704 Are I þis destanye of dule sulde drye by myne one !”
“Grefe þe noghte, Gaynour, fore Goddes lufe of hewene,
Ne gruche noghte my ganggyngē, it salle to gude turne !
Thy wonrydez and thy wepyngē woundez myne herte,
- 708 I may noghte wit of þis woo, for alle þis werlde ryche ;
I have made a kepare, a knyghte of thyne awene,
Overlyngē of Ynglande undyre thy selvene,
And that es *syr* Mordrede, þat þow has mekyllē praysede,
- 712 Sallē be thy dictour, my dere, to doo whatte the lykes.”
Thane he takes hys leve at ladys in chambyre,
Kysside them kyndlyche, and to Criste be-teches ;
And then cho swounes fullē swythe, whe[n] he hys
swerde aschede,
- 716 Twys in a swounyng, swette as cho walde !
He pressed to his palfray, in *presance* of lordes,
Prekys of the palez *with* his prys knyghtes,
Wyth a reallē rowte of þe rounde table ;
- 720 Soughte to-warde Sandewyche, cho sees hymē no more !
Thare the grete ware gederyde, wyth galyarde knyghtes,
Garneschit *over* þe grene felde and graythelyche arayedē ;
Dukkes and duzseperes daynttehely rydes,
- 724 Erlez of Ynglande *with* archers ynewe :
Schirreves scharply schiftys the comouns,
Rewlys be-fore þe ryche of the rounde table,
Assigneȝ ilke a contree to certayne lordes,
- 728 In the southe onē þe see banke saile whene þeme lykes
Thane bargeȝ theme buskez, and to þe baunke rowes,
Bryngeȝ blonkez onē bourde, and burlyche helmes ;
Trussez in tristly trappyde stedes,
- 732 Tenteȝ and othire toyleȝ, and targeȝ fullē ryche,
Cabanes *and* clathe sokkes, and coferez fullē noble,
Hukes and haknays, and horseȝ of armez ;

Thus they stowe ine the stuffe of fulle steryne knyghtez.

- 736 **Q**wene alle was schyppede that scholde, they schounte
no lengere,

Bot ventelde theme tyte, as þe tyde rynnez ;

Coggez and crayers, þan crossez þaire mastez,

At the commandment of þe kyng, uncoverde at ones.

- 740 Wyghtly one þe wale thay wye up þaire ankers,

By wytt of þe watyre mene of þe wale ythez,

frefkes one þe forestayne, faken þeire coblez,

In floynes and ferecestez, and Flemesche schyppes,

- 744 Tytt saillez to þe toppe, and turnez the lufe,

Standez appone stere-bourde, sterynly þay songene,

The pryce schippeze of the porte proven þeire depnesse,

And fondez wyth fulle saile ower the fawe ythez ;

- 748 Holly with-owttyne harme þay hale in bottes,

Schipe-mene scharply schotene þaire portez,

Launchez lede apone lufe, lacchene þer depez,

Lukkes to þe lade-sterne whene þe lyghte faillez ;

- 752 Castez coursez be crafte, whene þe clowde rysez,

With þe nedylle and þe stone one þe nyghte tydez ;

For drede of þe derke nyghte þay drecchede a lyttille,

And alle þe steryne of þe streme strekyne at onez :

- 756 The kyng was in a gret cogge, with knyghtez fulle many,

In a cabane enclosede, clenlyche arayede ;

With-in on a ryche bedde rystys a lyttylle,

And with þe swoghe of þe see in swefnyng he felle.

- 760 Hym dremyd of a dragone, dredfulle to beholde,

Come dryfande one þe depe to drensche hys pople,

Ewene walkande owte of the Weste landez,

Wanderande unworthyly overe the wale ythez ;

- 764 Bothe his hede and hys hals ware halely alle over

Cundyde of azure, enamelde fulle faire :

His scoulders ware schalyde alle in clene sylvere,

Schreede over alle þe schrympe with schrinkande poyntez ;

- 768 Hys wombe and hys wenges of wondyrfulle hewes,

In mervaylous maylys he mountede fulle hye ;

Then the ships
at the word of
command cross
their yards,

weigh their an-
chors ;

the well-skilled
sailors hoist the
sails and steer
the vessels.

Then they haul
in the boats, shut
the ports, heave
the lead, look well
to the guiding
star, and skil-
fully shape their
course by the
compass.

After a little de-
lay on account of
darkness, they all
sail at once.

The king is in a
large vessel with
many knights,

Reposing himself
in his cabin, he
falls asleep,

and dreams of a
dreadful dragon.

His head and
neck were blue ;
his shoulders cov-
ered with silver
scales ;

his belly and
wings of various
hues ;

his feet were
black, and out of
his mouth there
came flame.

Then there came
against the dra-
gon a fierce black
bear,

with huge paws
and crooked
tusks,

mis-shapen legs,
and foaming lips.

Hecamecapering
and mocking,

roaring and
raging for the
strife.

Then the dragon
assailed him,
fighting like a
falcon with beak
and claws.

The bear butts
him with his
tusks and causes
the blood to flow.

He had killed the
dragon but for
the fire which he
breathes.

Then the dragon
flies aloft, and
comes swooping
down,
tearing a vast
rent in the back
of the bear,

and carrying him
off in his claws,
lets him drop
into the water.

- Whayme *pat* he towchede he was tynt for ever!
Hys feete ware floreschede alle in fyne sabyllē,
772 And syche a vennymous flayre flowe fro his lyppez,
That the flode of *þe* flawez alle one fyre semyde!
Thane come of *þe* oryente, ewyne hyme agaynez,
A blake bustous bere abwene in the clowdes,
776 With yche a pawe as a poste, and paumes fulle huge,
With pykes fulle perilous, alle plyande þame semyde,
Lothene and lothely, lokkes and oþer,
Alle with lutterde legges, lokerde unfaire;
780 Filtyrde unfrely wyth fomaunde lyppez,
The foulleste of fegure that fourmede was ever!
He baltyrde, he bleryde, he braundyschte *þer*-after;
To bataile he bounez hym with bustous clowez:
784 He romede, he rarede, that roggede alle *þe* erthe!
So ruydly he rappyd at to ryot hym selvene!
Thane the dragone on dreghe dressede hyme aȝaynez,
And with hys duttez hym drafe one dreghe by *þe* walkyne:
788 He fares as a fawcone, frekly he strykez;
Bothe with feete and with fyre he feghttys at ones!
The bere in the bataile *þe* bygger hym semyde,
And byttes hyme boldlye wyth balefulle tuskez;
792 Syche buffetez he hym rechez with hys brode klokēs,
Hys brest and hys brathelle was blodye alle over!
He rawmpyde so ruydly that alle *þe* erthe ryfez,
Rynnande one reede blode as rayne of the hevene!
796 He hade wereyde the worme by wyghtnesse of strenghte,
Ne ware it fore *þe* wylde fyre *pat* he hyme wyth defendez:
Thane wandrys *þe* worme awaye to hys heghttez,
Comes glydande fro *þe* clowddez, and cowpez fulle evenē;
800 Towchez hym wyth his talonnez, and terez hys rigge,
Be-twyx *þe* taile and the toppe tene fote large!
Thus he brittenyd the bere, and broghte hyme olyfe,
Lette hyme falle in the flode, fleete whare hyme lykes:
804 So they bryng *þe* bolde kyng bynne *þe* schippe burde,
pat nere he bristez for bale, one bede whare he lyggez.

- Thane waknez the wyese kyng, very fore-travailede,
 Takes hym two phylozophirs, that folowede hym ever,
 808 In the sevyne science the suteleste fondene,
 The cony[n]geste of clergie undyre Criste knowene;
 He tolde þeme of hys tourmente, þat tyme þat he slepede,
 "Drechede with a dragone, and syche a derfe beste,
 812 Has mad me fulle very; þe telle me my swefene,
 Ore I mone swelte as swythe, as wysse me oure Lorde!"
 "Sir," saide þey sone thane, thies sagge philosophe, These wise men tell him that by the dragon is meant himself and his knights.
 "The dragone þat þow dremyde of, so dredfulle to schewe,
 816 That come dryfande over þe deepe, to drynchene thy pople,
 Sothely and certayne thy selvene it es,
 That thus saillez over þe see with thy sekyre knyghtez:
 The colurez þat ware castyne appone his clere wengez,
 820 May be thy kyngrykez alle, that thow has ryghte wonnyne;
 And the tachesesede taile, with tonges so huge,
 Be-takyns þis faire folke, that in thy fleet wendez.
 The bere that bryttenede was abowene in þe clowdez,
 824 Betakyns the tyrauntez þat tourmentez thy pople;
 Or elles with some gyaunt some journee salle happyne,
 In syngulere batelle by þoure selfe one;
 And þow salle hafe þe victorye thurghe helpe of oure Lorde,
 828 As þow in thy vision was opynly schewede!
 Of this dredfulle dreame ne drede the no more,
 Ne kare noghte, *syr conquerour*, bot comforth thy selvene;
 And thise þat saillez over þe see, with thy sekyre knyghtez." Arthur is exhorted to be of good courage.
 832 With trumpepez thene trystly, they trisene upe þaire saillez,
 And rowes over the ryche see, this rowtte alle at onez;
 The comely coste of Normandye they cachene fulle evene,
 And blythely at Barflete theis bolde are arryfed, They speed on their way, and arrive on the coast of Normandy.
 836 And fyndys a flete there of frendez ynewe,
 The floure and þe faire folke of fyftene rewmez;
 ffore kynges and capytaynez kepyde hym fayre,
 As he at Carelele commaundede at Cristymesse hym selvene. At Barflete they find a fleet of friends,
 840 Be they had taken the lande, and tentez upe rered, the flower of fifteen realms.
 Comez a templere tyte, and towchide to þe kyng— When they had disembarked and pitched their tents, a Templar

comes to the
king,
and tells him of
a ferocious giant
who feeds upon
men and chil-
dren,

“Here es a teraunt be-syde that *tourmentez* thi pople,
A grett geaunte of geene, engenderde of fendez;
He has fretyne of folke mo thane fyfe hondrethe,
And als fele fawntekyns of freeborne childyre!
This has bene his sustynaunce alle this sevene wynttere,
And ȝut es that sotte noghte sade, so wele hyme it lykez!
848 In þe contree of Constantyne no kynde has he levede,
With-owttyne kydd castelles enclosid wyth walles,
That he ne has clenly distroyede alle the knave childyre,
And theme caryede to þe cragge, and clenly deworyde!

who had that
day captured the
Duchess of Brit-
tany, and carried
her to his den.

852 The ducheze of Bretayne to daye has he takyne,¹
Beside Reynes as scho rade with hire ryche knyghttes;
Ledd hyre to the mountayne, thare þat lede lengez,
To lye by that lady, aye whyls his lyfe lastez.

856 We folowede o ferrome moo thene fyfe hundrethe,
Of beryns, and of burgeys, and bachelers noble,
Bot he coverde the cragge; cho cryede so lowde,
The care of þat creatoure cover salle I never!

She was the
flower of all
France,
and the fairest
lady on earth,

860 Scho was flour of alle Fraunce, or of fyfe rewmes,
And one of the fayreste that fourmede was evere,
The gentileste jowelle a-juggede with lordes,
ffro Geene unto Gerone, by Jhesu of hevene!

cousin of Ar-
thur's Queen.

864 Scho was thy wyfes cosyne, knowe it if þe lykez,
Commene of þe rycheeste, that regnez in erthe:
As thow arte ryghtwise kyngre rewte on thy pople,
And fande for to venge theme, that thus are rebuykyde!”
868 “Allas!” said *syr* Arthure, “so lange have I lyffede,
Hade I wytene of this, wele had me chesede;
Me es noghte fallene faire, bot me es foule happynede,
That thus this faire ladye this fende has dystroyede!

Then Sir Arthur
bitterly laments
her fate,

872 I had levere thane alle Fraunce, this fyftene wynter
I hade bene be-fore thate freke, a furlange of waye,
Whene he that ladye had laghte and ledde to þe montez:
I hadde lefte my lyfe are cho hade harme lymppyde!

and wishes he
had been there
to aid her.

¹ In the short romance of Arthur this unfortunate lady is described as fair Elaine, cousin to King Hoel.

- 876 Bot walde þow kene me to þe crage, thare þat kene lengez. He desires to
I walde cayre to þat coste, and carpe wythe hyme-selvne, know where the
To trete with that tyraunt fore tresone of londes, giant lives,
And take trewe for a tyme, till it may tyde bettyre."
- 880 "Sire, see þe þone farlande, with þone two-fyrez,
þar filsuez þat fonde, fraist whene the lykes?
Appone the creste of the cragge, by a colde welle,
That enclosez þe clyfe with þe clere strandez,
and is directed
by the Templar
how to find his
abode,
- 884 Ther may thou fynde folke fay wyth-owttyne nowmer, where there are
Mo florenez in faythe thane Fraunce es in aftyre; many captives,
And more tresour untrewely that traytour has getyne, and vast treasure
Thane in Troye was as I trowe, þat tyme þat it was wonne." stored up.
- 888 Thane romyez the ryche kyng for rewthe of þe pople, Then Arthur is
Raykez ryghte to a tente, and restez no lengere, greatly excited,
He welterys, he wristeles, he wryngez hys handez!
There was no wy of þis werlde, þat wyste whatt he menede!
- 892 He calles *syr* Cayous þat of þe cowpe serfede, and bids Sir
And *syr* Bedvere þe bolde, þat bare hys brande ryche,— Cayous and Sir
"Luke þe aftyre evensange be armyde at-ryghttez, Bedevere attend
On blonkez by þone buscayle, by þone blythe stremez, him at evening,
- 896 ffore I wille passe in pilgremage prevely here aftyre,
In the tyme of suppere, whene lordez are servede,
ffor to sekene a saynte be þone salte stremes, pretending that
In Seynt Mighelle mount, there myraclez are schewede." he is going on a
pilgrimage.
- 900 Aftyre evesange, Sir Arthure hyme-se[l]fene
Wente to hys wardrope, and warpe of hys wedez;
Armede hym in a actone with orfraeez fulle ryche, Then Arthur pro-
Aboven one þat a jeryne of Acres owte over, ceeds to dress
and arm himself,
- 904 Aboven þat a jesseraunt of jentyll maylez,
A jupone of Jerodyne jaggede in schrede; Then Arthur pro-
He brayedez one a bacenett burneschte of sylver, ceeds to dress
The beste þat was in Basille, wyth bordurs ryche; and arm himself,
- 908 The creste and þe coronalle, enclosed so faire
Wyth clasppis of clere golde, couched wyth stones;
The vesare, þe aventaille, enarmede so faire,
Voyde with-owttyne vice, with wyndowes of sylver;

and mounting a brown steed, rides to the spot where his knights await him.

- 912 His gloves gaylyche gilte, and gravene at þe hemmez,
 With grayvez and gobelets, glorious of hewe;
 He bracez a brade schelde, and his brande aschez,
 Bounede hyme a broune stede, and one þe bente hovys;
 916 He sterte tille his sterepe and stridez one lofte,
 Streynnez hyme stowttly, and sterys hyme faire,
 Brochez þe baye stede, and to þe buske rydez,
 And there hys knyghtes hyme kepede fulle clenlyche
 arayed:

There was a grove by the side of the river full of game and decked with flowers.

- 920 Thane they roode by þat ryver, þat rynnyd so swythe,
 þare þe ryndez overrechez with realle bowghez;
 The roo and þe rayne-dere reklesse thare rounene,
 In ranez and in rosers to ryotte þame selvene;

Here all birds abounded,

- 924 The frithez ware floreschte with flourez fulle many,
 Wyth fawcouns and fesantez of ferlyche hewez;
 All þe feulez thare fleschez, that flyez with wengez,
 ffore thare galedede þe gowke one grevez fulle lowde,

and nightingales in vast numbers made sweet music.

- 928 Wyth alkyne gladchipe þay gladdene þeme selvene:
 Of þe nyghtgale notez þe noizez was swette,
 They threpeide wyth the throstills thre-hundreth at ones!
 þat whate swowynge of watyr, and syngynge of byrdez,

Here they leave their horses, and the king bids his knights to await his return.

- 932 It myghte salve hyme of sore, that sounde was nevere!
 Thane ferkez this folke, and one fotte lyghttez,
 ffestenez theire faire stedez o ferrome by-twene;
 And thene the kyng kenely comandyde hys knyghtez
 936 ffor to byde with theire blonkez, and bowne no forthyre,—
 “ffore I wille seke this seynte by my-selfe one,
 And melle with this mayster mane, þat this monte ʒemez;
 And seyne salle ʒe offyre, aythyre aftyre oþer,

The king alone ascends the mountain,

- 940 Menskfully at Saynt Mighelle fulle myghty with Criste!”
 The kyng coveris þe cragge wyth cloughes fulle hye,
 To the creste of the clyffe he clymbez one lofte;
 Keste upe hys umbrere, and kenly he lukes,
 944 Caughte of þe colde wynde to comforthe hym selvene;
 Two fyrez he fyndez fflawmande fulle hye,
 The fourtedele a furlange be-twene þis he walkes;

- þe waye by þe welle strandez he wandyrde hym one,
 948 To wette of þe warlawe, whare þat he lengez;
 He ferkez to þe fyrste fyre, and evene there he fyndez
 A wery wafulle wedowe, wryngande hire handez,
 And gretande on a grave gryselly teres,
 952 Now merkyde one molde, sene myddaye it semede:
 He saluþede þat sorowfulle with sittande wordez,
 And fraynez aftyre the fende fairely there aftyre:
 Thane this wafulle wyfe un-wynly hym gretez,
 956 Coverde up on hire kneess, and clappyde hir handez;
 Said, "carefulle caremane, thow carpez to lowde!
 May þone warlawe wyt, he worows us alle!
 Weryd worthe þe wyghte ay, that þe thy wytt refede,
 960 That mase the to wayfe here in þise wylde lakes!
 I warne þe fore wyrchipe, þou wylnez aftyr sorowe!
 Whedire buskes þou berne? unblysside þow semes!
 Wenez thow to brittene hyme with thy brande ryche?
 964 Ware thow wyghttere thane Wade or Wawayne owthire,
 Thow wynnys no wyrchipe, I warne the be-fore!
 Thow saynned the unsekyrly to seke to þese mountez,
 Siche sex ware to symple to semble with hyme one;
 968 ffor and thow see hyme with syghte, the servez no herte,
 To sayne the sekerly, so semez hym huge!
 Thow arte frely and faire, and in thy fyrste flourez,
 Bot thow arte fay be my faythe, and þat me for-thynkkys!
 972 Ware syche fyfty one a felde, or one a faire erthe,
 The freke walde with hys fyste felle þow at ones!
 Loo! here, the ducheze dere, to daye was cho takyne,
 Depe dolvenē and dede dyked in moldez;
 976 He hade morthirede this mylde be myddaye war rongene,
 With-owttnye mercy one molde, not watte it ment:
 He has forsede hir and fylede, and cho es fay levede;
 He slewe hir un-slely, and slitt hir to þe navylle!
 980 And here have I bawmede hir, and beryede þer aftyr,
 ffor bale of þe botelesse, blythe be I never!
 Of alle þe frendrez cho hade, þere folowede none aftyre,

and going to a fire which he sees he finds a woeful widow wringing her hands.

He asks her concerning the giant.

She answers with terror, and warns him that he cannot hope to contend with so terrible a monster.

Fifty such as Arthur he could fell with his fist.

The poor Duchess had been ravished and murdered by him, and the doleful widow, her foster-mother, had buried her.

and would remain
there till death to
bewail her.

Then Arthur says
that he comes
from the great
King Arthur on
a mission to
treat with the
giant.

The old wife tells
him that he cares
nothing for laws
or treaties; that
he regards not
gold or treasure;

only he has a
famous kyrtle co-
vered with hair,

which is bordered
with the beards
of mighty kings,

which are sent
to him on each
Easter-eve.

He has long
wished for the
beard of Arthur,
and tried to force
the Breton kings
to get it for him.

If he has brought
the beard, he may

- Bot I hir foster modyr of fyftene wynter!
- 984 To ferke of this farlande, fande salle I never,
Bot here be foundene on felde, till I be fay levede!"
Thane answers syr Arthure to þat alde wyf;
"I am comyne fra the conquerour, curtaise and gentille,
- 988 As one of þe hathelest of Arthur knyghtez,
Messenger to þis myx, for mendement of þe pople,
To mele with this maister mane, that here this mounte
þemez;
To trete with this tyraunt for tresour of landez,
- 992 And take trew for a tyme, to bettyr may worthe."
"Ȝa, thire wordis are bot waste," *quod* this wif thane,
"ffor bothe landez and lythes ffulle lyttill by he settes;
Of rentez ne of rede golde rekkez he never,
- 996 ffor he wille lenge owt of lawe, as hym-selfe thynkes,
With-owtene licence of lede, as lorde in his awene;
Bot he has a kyrtill one, kepide for hym selvene,
That was sponene in Spayne with specyalle byrdez,
- 1000 And sythyn garnescht in Grece fulle graythly to-gedirs,
That es hydede alle with hare hally al overe,
And bordyrde with the berdez of burlyche kynges,
Crispid and kombide, that kempis may knawe
- 1004 I the kyng by his colour, in kythe there he lengez;
Here the fermez he fangez of fyftene rewmez,
ffor ilke Esterne ewyne, how-ever that it falle;
They send it hym sothely for saughte of þe pople,
- 1008 Sekerly at þat sesone with certayne knyghtez,
And he has aschede Arthure alle þis seven wynter.
fforthy hurdez he here, to owtraye hys pople,
Tille þe Bretones kynges have burneschte his lypys,
- 1012 And sent his berde to that bolde wyth his beste berynes;
Bot thowe hafe broghte þat berde, bowne the no forthire,
ffor it es butelesse bale, thowe biddez oghte elles;
ffor he has more tresour to take whene hym lykez,
- 1016 Than evere aughte Arthure, or any of hys elders;
If thowe hase broghte þe berde, he bese more blythe

- Thane þowe gafe hym Burgoyne, or Bretayne þe more ; be sure of a hearty welcome.
- Bot luke nowe for charitee, þow chasty thy lyppes,
- 1020 That the no wordez eschape, whate so be-tydez ; But he must approach him with due caution,
- Luke þat presante be priste, and presse hym bott lyttille, ffor he es at his sowper, he wille be sone grevyde ;
- And þow my concelle doo, þow doffe of thy clothes, and had better doff his clothes and kneel to him.
- 1024 And knele in thy kyrtylle, and calle hym thy lorde ; His supper at this season is composed of seven male children chopped up with pickles and condiments.
- He sowppes alle þis sesone with sevene knave childre, Choppid in a chargour of chalke whytt sylver,
- With pekille and powdyre of precious spycez,
- 1028 And pyment fulle plentevous of Portyngale wyne ; Three savage birds act as turnspits for him.
- Thre balefulle birdez his brochez þey turne, That byddez his bedgatt, his byddyng to wyrche ;
- Siche foure scholde be fay with-in foure hourez,
- 1032 Are his fylth ware filled, that his flesch ȝernes." "Yes," says Arthur, "I have indeed brought this beard ; but show me where I shall find him."
- "ȝa, I have broghte þe berd," quod he, "the bettyre me lykez ;
- ffor-thi wille I bounē me, and bere it my selvenē ;
- Bot lefe walde þow lere me where þat lede lengez,
- 1036 I salle alowe þe and I liffe, oure Lorde so me helpe !" Then she directs him to approach the great fire.
- "fferke fast to þe fyre," quod cho, "that flawmez so hye ;
- Thare fillis þat fende hyme, fraist whene the lykez ;
- Bot thow moste seke more southe, syddynges a lyttille,
- 1040 ffor he wille hafe sent hym-selfe sex myle large." To þe sowre of þe reke he soghte at þe gayneste,
- Sayned hyme sekerly with certayne wordez,
- And sydlynges of þe segge the syghte had he rechide,
- 1044 How un-semly þat sott satt sowpande hym one ; Arthur goes to the fire, and finds the giant lying extended with his back to the fire, picking the thigh of a man.
- He lay levand one lange, bugande un-faire, þe thee of a mans lymme lyfte up by þe haunche ;
- His bakke and his bewschers, and his brode lende,
- 1048 He bekez by þe bale fyre, and breklesse hyme semede ;
- pare ware rostez fulle ruyde, and rewfulle bredez, Beerynes and bestaile brochede to-geders ;
- Cowle-fulle cramede of crysinede childyre,
- 1052 Sum as brede brochede, and bierdez þame tournede. Roasts of the flesh of children and cattle were spitted together, being prepared for him in various ways.

Then Arthur's
heart bleeds for
the woes inflicted
by this wretch.

He fastens on
his shield and
brandishes his
bright sword,

and right boldly
addresses the
giant.

He upbraids
him with his vile
crimes and his
unclean meat.

For his horrible
murders of chris-
tian children,

he would now
take vengeance
on him, by the
aid of St. Michael,
and give his soul
to the devil.

Then the giant
stared with
amazement, and
gnashed his teeth
with fury.

Out of his mouth
there came
smoke, which
covered all his
face.

He was hook-
nosed like a
hawk, with hair
up to his eyes, and
beetle brows.

His skin was hard
as that of a dog-
fish; his ears
huge and ugly;
his eyes horrible
and burning.

And þane this comlych kyng, by-cause of his pople,
His herte bledez for bale, one bent ware he standez !

Thane he dressede one his schelde, schuntes no lengere,
1056 Braundesche his bryghte swerde by þe bryghte hiltéz,
Raykez to-warde þe renke reghte with a ruyde wille,
And hyely hailsez þat hulke with hawtayne wordez,—
“ Now, alle-weldand Gode, þat wyrsceppez us alle,

1060 Giff the sorowe and syte, sotte there thow lygges,
ffor the fulsomete freke that fourmede was evere !
ffouly thow fedys the, þe fende have thi saule !
Here es eury un-clene, carle, be my trowthe,

1064 Caffé of creatours alle, thow curssedé wriche !
Be-cause that þow killide has þise cresmede chilydre,
Thow has marters made, and broghte oute of lyfe,
þat here are brochede one bente, and brittenede with
thi handez,

1068 I salle merke þe thy mede, as þou has myche serfed,
Thurghe myghte of Seynt Mighelle, þat þis monte ʒemes !
And for this faire ladye, þat þow has fey levyde,
And þus forced one foulde, for fylth of þi-selfene !

1072 Dresse the now, dogge, sone, the develle have þi saule !
ffor þow salle dye this day, thurghe dynt of my handez !”

Thane glonpede þe glotone and glorede un-faire ;
He grevede as a grewhounde, with grysly tuskes ;
1076 He gapede, he groned faste, with grucchande latez,
ffor grefe of þe gude kyng, þat hymé with grame gretez !
His fax and his foretoppe was filterede to-geders,
And owte of his face fome ane halfe fote large ;

1080 His frount and his forhevede alle was it over,
As þe felle of a froske, and fraknede it semede,
Huke-nebbyde as a hawke, and a hore berde,
And herede to þe hole eyghne with hyngande browes ;

1084 Harske as a hunde-fisch, hardly who so lukez,
So was þe hyde of þat hulke hally al over !
Erne had he fulle huge, and ugly to schewe,
With eghne fulle horreble, and ardaunt for sothe ;

- 1088 flatt mowthede as a fluke, *with* fleryande lyp pys,
 And þe flesche in his fortethe fowly as a bere :
 His berde was brothy and blake, þat tille his brest rechede,
 Grassede as a mereswyne with cokes fulle huge,
 1092 And alle falterde þe flesche in his foule lyp pys,
 Ilke wrethe as a wolfe-hevede, it wraythe owtt at ones !
 Bullenekkyde was þat bierne, and brade in the scholders,
 Brok-brestede as a brawne, *with* brustils fulle large,
 1096 Ruyd armes as an ake *with* rusclede sydes,
 Lyme and leskes fulle lothyne, leve þe for sothe :
 Schovelle-fotede was þat schalke, and schaylande hyme
 semyde,
With schankez unschaply, schowande to-gedyrs ;
 1100 Thykke theefe as a thursse, and thikkere in the hanche,
 Greesse growene as a galte, fulle grylych he lukez !
 Who þe lenghe of þe lede lelly accountes,
 ffo þe face to þe fote, was fyfe fadome lange !
 1104 Thane stertez he up sturdely one two styffe schankez,
 And sone he caughte hyme a clubb alle of clene yryne !
 He walde hafe kyllede þe kyng *with* his kene wapene,
 Bot thurghe þe crafte of Cryste þit þe carle failede ;
 1108 The creest and þe coronalle, þe claspes of sylver,
 Clenly *with* his clubb he crasschede doune at onez !
 The kyng castes up his schelde, and covers hym faire,
 And *with* his burlyche brande a box he hyme reches ;
 1112 ffulle butt in þe frunt the fromonde he hittez,
 That the burnyscht blade to þe brayne rynnez ;
 He feyed his fysnamye *with* his foule hondez,
 And frappez faste at hys face fersely þer-aftyr !
 1116 The kyng chaungez his fote, eschewes a lyttill,
 Ne had he eschapede þat choppe, chevede had evylle ;
 He folowes in fersly, and festenesse a dynte
 Hye upe one the haunche, *with* his harde wapyne,
 1120 That he hillid the swerde halfe a fote large ;
 The hott blode of þe hulke un-to the hilde rynnez,
 Ewyne into inmette the gyaunt he hyttez,

Flat-mouthed,
 with grinning
 lips, and jaws
 like a bear.

A black beard
 reached to his
 breast, with
 mighty bristles.
 The flesh of his
 lips was in un-
 even folds, each
 fold, like an out-
 law, twisted it-
 self out.

He was bull-
 necked and broad
 in the shoulders ;
 breasted like a
 boar, with huge
 bristles; his arms
 like an oak; his
 limbs and flanks
 loathly; shovel-
 footed and scaly,
 with unshapely
 shanks ;

of gigantic thick-
 ness in his
 haunches.
 Fat as a pig, he
 looks horrible.

In height, full
 five fathoms.

Up starts this
 fell giant, and
 seizing an iron
 club, aims a blow
 at Arthur.

The king catches
 it on his shield,
 and returns the
 blow with his
 sword right upon
 the forehead.

The bright blade
 pierces to the
 brain.

The giant tears
 his face with his
 hands, and strikes
 fiercely at the
 king.

Arthur draws
 back,

and then drives
 his sword into the
 giant's haunch.

The monster roars and strikes at random. So mighty is his stroke, that it penetrates a sword's length into the ground. The king nearly swoons at the noise of the blow, but quickly striking him, bursts asunder his groin. His entrails and blood gush out. Then throwing away his club, the giant seizes Arthur in his arms.

The baleful birds pray for the success of Arthur.

They have a fearful wrestling match, and fall from the top of the cliff down to the shore.

Arthur stabs the giant,

who in his death-struggle breaks three of Arthur's ribs.

His knights find him lying exhausted.

Just to þe genitales, and jaggede þame in sondre!

- 1124 Thane he romyede and rarede, and ruydly he strykez
ffulle egerly at Arthur, and one the erthe hittez
A swerde lenghe *with-in* the swarthe, he swappez at ones,
That nere swounes þe kyng for swoughe of his dynttez!
- 1128 Bot ȝit the kyng sweperly fulle swythe he byswenkez,
Swappez in *with* the swerde þat it þe swange brystedd;
Bothe þe guttez and the gorre guschez owte at ones,
þat alle englaymez þe gresse, one grounde þer he standez!
- 1132 Thane he castez the clubb, and the kyng hentez,
On þe creeste of þe cragg he caughte hyme in armez,
And enclosez hyme clenly, to crusehene hys rybbez;
So harde haldez he þat hende, that nere his herte brystez!
- 1136 þane þe balefulle bierdez bownez to þe erthe,
Knelande and cryande, and clappide þeire handez,—
“Crist comforte ȝone knyghte, and kepe hym fro sorowe,
And latte never ȝone fende felle hyme olyfe!”
- 1140 ȝitt es þe warlow so wyghte, he welters hyme undere,
Wrothely þai wrythyne and wrystille to-gederz,
With welters and walowes over *with-in* þase buskez,
Tumbellez and turnes faste, and terez þaire wedez,
- 1144 Untenderly fro þe toppe thai tiltine to-gederz;
Whilome Arthure over, and oþer while undyre,
ffro þe heghe of the hylle un-to the harde roche;
They feyne never are they falle at þe flode merkes;
- 1148 Bot Arthur *with* ane anlace egerly smyttez,
And hittez ever in the hulke up to þe hiltex;
þe theefe at þe dede thrawe so throly hyme thryngez,
þat three rybbys in his syde he thyrstez in sundere!
- 1152 Thenne *syr* Kayous the kene unto the kyng styrtez,—
Said, “allas! we are lorne, my lorde es confundede,
Over fallene with a fende! us es fulle hapnede!
We mone be forfetede in faith, and flemyde for ever!”
- 1156 þay hafe up hys hawberke þane, and handilez þer-undyre,
His hyde and his haunche eke, one heghte to þe schuldrez;
His flawnke and his feletez, and his faire sydez,

Bothe his bakke and his breste, and his bryghte armez :

1160 þay ware fayne that they fandē no flesche entamede,
And for þat journee made joye, þir gentille knyghttez ;

They examine him and find no wound.

"Now, certez," saise Sir Bedwere, "it semez, be my Lorde !

Sir Bedever speaks facetiously of this saint whom Arthur had sought.

He sekez seyntez bot seldene, þe sorere he grypes,

1164 That thus clekys this corsaunt owte of þir heghe clyffez,
To carye forthe sicke a carle at close hym in silvere ;
Be Myghelle of syche a makke, I hafe myche wondyre
That ever owre soveraygne Lorde suffers hyme in hevене ;

1168 And alle seyntez be syche, þat servez oure Lorde,
I salle never no seynt bee, be my fadyre sawle !"

If all saints are like him no saint would be he.

Thane bourdez þe bolde kyng at Bedvere wordez,—
þis seynt have I soghte, so helpe me owre Lorde !

1172 ffor-thy brayd owtte þi brande, and broche hyme to þe herte ;

Arthur bids him stab the monster to the heart, to make sure of him, for only once before had he met with such a terrible foe.

Be sekere of this *sergeaunt*, he has me sore grevede !

I faghte noghte wyth syche a freke þis fyftene wyntyrs,
Bot in the montez of Araby I mett syche anoþer ;

1176 He was þe forcyere be ferre þat had I nere fundene,
Ne had my fortune bene faire, fey had I levede !

Anone stryke of his hevede, and stake it there aftyre,
Gife it to thy sqwyere, fore he es wele horsede ;

He bids them cut off his head,

1180 Bere it to *syr* Howelle, þat es in harde bandez,
And byd hyme herte hym wele, his enmy es destruede !

and bear it first to Sir Hoel,

Syne bere it to Bareflete, and brace it in yryne,
And sett it on the barbycane, biernes to schewe ;

then to Barflete, and set it on the barbican.

1184 My brande and my brode schelde apone þe bent lyggez,
On þe creeste of þe cragge, thare fyrste we encontrede,
And þe clubb þarby, alle of clene irene,
þat many Cristene has kyllde in Constantyne landez ;

His sword and shield and the giant's club are to be fetched from the hill.

1188 fferke to the far-lande, and fetch me þat wapene,
And late founde tille oure flete, in flode þare it lengez :

If thow wylle any tresour, take whate the lykez ;

Have I the kyrtyle and þe clubb, I coveite noghte elles !"

They may take what treasure they will ; all Arthur desires is the kirtle and the club.

1192 Now þey caire to þe cragge, þise comlyche knyghtez,

The affair was kept a secret till break of day.

Then the people kneel before Arthur, and thank and praise him for slaying the giant.

Arthur ascribes all to God.

He bids his followers distribute the giant's treasure among the clergy and people.

A church and convent are to be built on the cliff.

When the giant was slain, Arthur moves from Barflete to Castle Blanc.

And broghte hyme þe brade schelde, and his bryghte wapene,

The clubb and the cotte alles, Sir Kayous hym selvene, And kayres with conquerour, the kynggez to schewe;

1196 That in coverte the kyngge helde closse to hym selvene, Whilles elene day fro þe clowde, clymbyd on lofte.

Be that to courte was comene clamour fulle huge,

And be-fore the comlyche kyngge they knelyd alle at ones,—

1200 “Welcome, oure liege lorde, to lang has thow duellyde! Governour undyr Gode, graytheste and noble, To whame grace es graunted, and gyffene at his wille! Now thy comly come has comforthede us alle!

1204 Thow has in thy realtee revengyde thy pople! Thurghe helpe of thy hande, thyne enmyse are struyede, That has thy renkes over-ronne, and refte theme their childyre!

What never rewme owte of araye so redyly relevede!”

1208 Thane þe conquerour Cristenly carpez to his pople, “Thankes Gode,” *quod* he, “of þis grace, and no gome elles, ffor it was never manes dede, bot myghte of Hymselfene, Or myracle of hys modyre, þat mylde es tille alle!”

1212 He somond þan þe schippemene scharpely þer-aftyre, To schake furth with þe schyre mene to schifte þe gudez; “Alle þe myche tresour that traytour had wonnene, To commons of the contré, clergye ond oper,

1216 Luke it be done and delte to my dere pople, That none pleyne of their parte, o peyne of þour lyfez.” He comande hys cosyne, with knyghtlyche wordez, To make a kyrke on þe cragg, ther the corse lengez,

1220 And a covent there-in, Criste for to serfe, In mynde of þat martyre, þat in þe monte rystez.

Qwen Sir Arthur the kyngge had kylled þe gyaunt, Than blythely fro Bareflete he buskes one þe morne, 1224 With his batelle one brede, by þa blythe stremes;

- To-warde Castelle Blanke he chesez hym the waye,
 Thurghe a faire champayne, undyr schalke hyllis;
 The kyng fraystez a-furth *over* the fresche strandez,
- 1228 ffoundez with his faire folke *over* as hym lykez:
 ffurthe stepes that steryne, and strekez his tentis
 One a strenghe by a streme, in þas straytt landez.
 Onone aftyre middaye, in the mene-while,
- 1232 þare comez two messangeres of tha fere marchez,
 ffra þe marschalle of Fraunce, and menskfully hym gretes,
 Besoghte hyme of sucour, and saide hyme thise wordez,—
 “Sir, thi marschalle thi mynistre, thy mercy be-sekez,
- 1236 Of thy mekille magestee, fore mendement of thy pople,
 Of þise marchez-mene, that thus are myskaryede,
 And thus merred amange, maugree their eghne;
 I witter þe þe emperour es entirde into Fraunce,
- 1240 With osten of enmye, horrible and huge;
 Brynnez in Burgoyne thy burghes so ryche,
 And brittenes thi baronage, that bieldez thare-in;
 He encrochez kenely by craftez of armez,
- 1244 Countrese and castelles þat to thy coroun langez;
 Confoundez thy commons, clergy and oþer;
 Bot thow comfurth theme, syr kyng, cover salle they
 never!
- He fellez forestez fele, forrayse thi landez,
- 1248 ffyrsthez no fraunchez, bot fraisez the pople;
 þus he fellez thi folke, and fangez their gudez!
 ffremedly the Franche tung fey es be-lefede.
 He drawes in-to douce Fraunce, as Duchemen tellez,
- 1252 Dresside with his dragouns, dredfulle to schewe;
 Alle to dede they dyghte with dynttys of swerddez,
 Dukez and dusperes, þat dreches thare-ine;
 ffor-thy the lordez of the lande, ladys and oþer,
- 1256 Prayes the for Petyr luffe, þe apostyll of Rome,
 Sen thow arte present in place, þat þow wille profyre make
 To þat perilous prynce, be processe of tyme;
 He ayers by þone hilles, þone heghe holtez undyr,
- Then come two messengers from the Marshal of France, who acquaint Arthur
- with the mischief which the Emperor Lucius is working in France,
- seizing castles,
- confounding the commons,
- felling forests,
- taking goods,
- killing dukes and douze-peers.
- Therefore they desire Arthur's help.

- 1260 Hufes thare *with* hale strenghe of haythene kynges ;
 Helpe nowe for His lufe, that heghe in hevene sittez,
 And talke tristly to theme, that thus us destroyes !”
 The kyng biddis *syr* Boice, “ buske the be-lyfe !
- He sends some
of his knights to
the Emperor, 1264 Take *with* the *syr* Berille, and Bedwere the ryche,
 Sir Gawayne and *syr* Gryme, these galyarde knyghtez,
 And graythe þowe to þone grene wode, and gose over
 þer nedes ;
 Saise to *syr* Lucius, to unlordly he wyrkez,
- 1268 Thus letherly agaynes law to lede my pople ;
 I lette hyme or oghte lange, þif me þe lyffe happene,
 Or my lyghte salle lawe, þat hyme overe lande folowes ;
 Comande hym kenely wyth crewelle wordez,
- to bid him de-
part out of his
kingdom, or meet
him in single
combat. 1272 Cayre owte of my kyngryke with his kydd knyghtez ;
 In caase that he wille noghte, þat cursede wreche,
 Come for his curtaisie, and countere me ones !
 Thane salle we rekkene fulle rathe, whatt ryghte þat he
 claymes,
- 1276 Thus to ryot þis rewme and raunsone the pople !
 Thare salle it derely be delte *with* dynttez of handez :
 The Dryghttene at Domesdaye dele as hyme lykes !”
 Now thei graythe theme to goo, theis galyarde knyghttez,
- The knights go
on their errand
glittering in gold
upon greatsteeds. 1280 Alle gleterande in golde, appone grete stedes,
 To-warde þe grene wode, þat *with* growndene wapyne,
 To grete wele the grett lorde, that wolde be grefede sone ;
 Thise hende hovez on a hille by þe holte eynes,
- They see the lux-
urious camp of
the heathen
kings, 1284 Be-helde þe howsyng fulle hye of Hathene kynges ;
 They herde in theire herbergage hundrethez fulle many,
 Hornez of olyfantez fulle helych blawene ;
 Palaisez proudliche pyghte, þat palyd ware ryche,
- 1288 Of palle and of purple, wyth *precyous* stones ;
 Pensels and pomelle of ryche prynce armez,
 Fighte in þe playne mede, þe pople to schewe :
 And thane the Romayns so ryche had arayed their tentez
- and the rich tents
of the Romans. 1292 On rawe by þe ryvere, undyre þe round hillez,
 The emperour for honour ewyne in the myddes,

- Wyth egles al *over* ennelled so faire :
 And saw hyme and þe Sowdane, and *senatours* many,
 1296 Seke to-warde a sale with sextene kynges,
 Syland softely in, swettly by theme selfene,
 To sowpe withe þat soveraygne, fulle selcouthe metez.
 Nowe they wende *over* the watyre, þise wyrchipulle
 knyghttez,
- 1300 Thurghe þe wode to þe wone, there the wyese rystez ;
 Reght as þey hade weschene, and went to þe table,
 Sir Wawayne þe worthethy un-wynly he spekes,—
 “The myghte *and* þe majestee, that menskes us alle,
- 1304 That was merked and made thurghe þe myghte of hym-
 selvene,
 Gyffe þow sytte in þow sette, Sowdane and oþer,
 That here are semblede in sale, unfawghte mott þe worthe !
 And þe fals heretyke, þat *emperour* hym callez,
- 1308 That occupyes in erreure the empyre of Rome,
 Sir Arthure herytage, þat honourable kyng,
 That alle his auncestres aughte bot Utere hyme one,
 That ilke cursynge þat Cayme kaghte for his brothyre,
- 1312 Cleffe *over* the cukewalde, with croune ther thow lengez,
 ffor the unlordlyeste lede þat I on lukede ever !
 My lorde mervailles hym mekylle, mane, be my trouthe,
 Why thow morthires his mene, þat no mysse serves,
- 1316 Commons of þe contré, clergye and oþer,
 þat are noghte coupable þer-in, ne knowes noght in armez ;
 ffor-thi the comelyche kyng, curtays and noble,
 Comandez þe kenely to kaire of his landes,
- 1320 Ore elles for thy knyghthede encontre hyme ones ;
 Sen þow covettes the coroune, latte it be declarede !
 I hafe dyschargide me here, chalange whoo lykez,
 Be-fore alle thy chevalrye, cheftaynes and oþer :
- 1324 Schape us an ansuere, and schunte þow no lengere,
 þat we may schifte at þe schorte, and schewe to my lorde.”
 The *emperour* ansuerde wyth austeryne wordez,
 “þe are with myne enmy, Sir Arthure hyme selvene !

The Roman Emperor and the Sultan are going to banquet together.

The knights present themselves.

Sir Gawaine delivers the message,

and upbraids with haughty words the Roman Emperor ;

bids him depart, or try a single combat with Arthur.

He challenges all the knights of Rome.

The Emperor replies,

- 1328 It es none honour to me to owtray hys knyghttez,
 poghe þe be irous mene, þat ayres one his nede; ;
 Bot say to thy soveraygne, I send hyme thes wordez,
 Ne ware it for reverence of my ryche table,
- threatening the 1332 þou sulde repent fulle rathe of þi ruyde wordez!
 knights for their
 audacity. Siche a rebawde as þowe rebuke any lordez,
 Wyth theire retenuz arrayede, fulle realle *and* noble!
- He will stay in 1336 Here wille I suggourne, whilles me lefe thynkes,
 Arthur's land as
 long as he pleases, And sythene seke in by Sayne with solace þer-aftre; ;
 Ensegge all þa cetese be the salte strandez,
 And seyne ryde in by Rone, þat rynnes so faire,
 And of alle his ryche castelles rusche doune þe wallez; ;
- and destroy his 1340 I salle noghte lefe in Paresche, by processe of tyme,
 cities and castles. His parte of a pechelyne, prove whene hyme lykes!"
 "Now, certez," sais *syr* Wawayne, "myche wondyre
 have I,
 þat syche an alfyne as thow dare speke syche wordez!
- Whereupon Sir 1344 I had lever thene alle Fraunce, that hevede es of rewmes,
 Gawaine desires
 himself to fight
 with him, ffyghte with the faythefully one felde be oure one."
 Thane answers *syr* Gayous fulle gobbede wordes,—
 Was eme to þe emperour, and erle hyme selfene,—
- but Sir Gayous, 1348 "Evere ware þes Bretons braggers of olde!
 uncle to the
 Roman Emperor,
 answers and
 charges the Brit- Loo! how he brawles hyme for hys bryghte wedes,
 ish knights with
 being braggarts. As he myghte bryttyne us alle with his brande ryche!
 þitt he berkes myche boste, þone boy þere he standes!"
- On this Sir Ga- 1352 Thane grevyde *syr* Gawayne at his grett wordes,
 waine rushes at
 him and strikes
 off his head. Graythes to-warde þe gome with grucchande herte;
 With hys stelyne brande he strykes of hys hevede,
 And sterttes owtte to hys stede, and with his stale
 wendes!
- Then the British 1356 Thurghe þe wacches þey wente, thes wirchipulle
 knights fly with
 all speed. knyghtez,
 And fyndez in theire fare waye wondyrlyche many;
 Over the watyre þey wente by wyghtnesse of horses,
 And tuke wynde as þey walde by þe wodde hemes:
- 1360 Thane folous frekly one fote frekkes ynewe,

- And of þe Romayns arrayed appone ryche stedes,
 Chasede thurgh a champayne oure chevalrous knyghtez, The Romans give chase.
 Tille a cheefe forest, one schalke white horses :
- 1364 Bot a freke alle in fyne golde, and fretted in salle,
 Come forþermaste on a fresone, in flawinande wedes ;
 A faire floreschte spere in fewtyre he castes,
 And folowes faste one owre folke, and freschelye ascryez.
- 1368 Thane *syr* Gawayne the gude appone a graye stede, The foremost of the pursuers is slain by Sir Gawaine.
 He gryppes hym a grete spere, and graythely hyme hittez ;
 Thurgh þe guttez in-to the gorre he gyrdes hyme ewyne,
 That the groundene stele glydez to his herte !
- 1372 The gome and þe grette horse at þe grounde lyggez,
 ffulle gryselyche gronande, for grefe of his woundez.
 þane presez a preker ine, ffulle proudly arayed,
 That beres alle of pourpour, palyde with sylver :
- 1376 Byggly on a broune stede he profers ffulle large ;
 He was a Paynyme of Perse þat þus hyme persuede. Another knight, a paynim of Persia, by Sir Boys.
 Sir Boys un-abaiste alle he buskes hyme a-gaynes,
 With a bustous launce he berez hyme thurgh,
- 1380 þat þe breme and the brade schelde appone þe bente
 lyggez !
 And he bryngez furthe the blade, and bownez to his
 felowez.
- Thane *syr* Foltemour of myghte, a man mekylle praysede, Sir Foltemour seeks to avenge Sir Gayous,
 Was movede one his manere, and manacede ffulle faste ;
- 1384 He graythes to *syr* Gawayne graythely to wyrche,
 ffor grefe of *syr* Gayous, þat es one grounde levede.
 Thane *syr* Gawayne was glade ; agayne hyme he rydez,
 Wyth Galuth his gude swerde graythely hyme hyttez ;
- 1388 The knyghte one þe coursere he clevede in sondyre,
 Clenlyche fro þe croune his corse he dyvysyde,
 And þus he killez þe knyghte with his kydd wapene !
 Than a ryche mane of Rome relyede to his byerns,— but Sir Gawaine cleaves him asunder.
- 1392 “ It salle repent us ffulle sore and we ryde forthire !
 þone are bolde bosturs, þat syche bale wyrkez ;
 It befelle hym ffulle foule, þat þame so fyrste namede.” Then a rich man of Rome suggests a retreat.

- The rich Romans
return,
- 1396 Thane þe riche Romayns retournes þaire brydilles
To þaire tentis in tene, telles theire lordez
How *syr* Marschalle de Mowne es on þe monte lefede,
ffore-justyde at that *journee*, for his grett japez.
Bot thare chazez *one* oure mene chevallrous knyghtez,
- but five thousand
horsemen still
pursue the
knights,
- 1400 ffyve thosande folke appone faire stedes,
ffaste to a foreste *one* a felle watyr,
That fillez fro þe falow see fyfty myle large.
Thare ware Bretons enbuschide, and banarettez noble,
- and fall upon
an ambush of
Bretons,
- 1404 Of þe chevalrye cheefe of þe kynges chambyre,
Seese them chase oure mene, and changene þeire horsez,
And choppe doune cheftaynes, that they moste chargyde ;
Thane þe embuschement of Bretons brake owte at ones,
- who break out
suddenly on
them,
- 1408 Brothely at banere, and Bedwyne knyghtez,
Arrestede of þe Romayns, þat by þe fyrthe rydez,
Alle þe realeste renkes þat to Rome lengez ;
Thay iche on þe enmyse and egerly strykkys,
- with shouts of
"Arthur."
- 1412 Erles of Englande, and Arthure ascryes,
Thrughe brenes and bryghte scheldez, brestez they thyrlz,
Bretons of the boldeste with theire bryghte swerdez ;
Thare was Romayns *over* redyne, and ruydly wondyde,
- The Romans are
defeated and
driven back,
- 1416 Arrestede as rebawdez, with rytous knyghttez !
The Romaynes owte of araye removede at ones,
And rydes awaye in a rowtte, for reddoure it semys !
To þe *senatour* Petyr a sandes-mane es *commyne*,
- 1420 And saide, "*Syr*, sekyrly, þour seggez are supprysside !"
Than tene thowsande mene he semblede at ones,
And sett sodanly *one* oure seggez, by þe salte strandez ;
Than ware Bretons abaiste, and grevede a lyttille,
- but the Senator
Peter sends ten
thousand men.
- 1424 Bot þit the banerettez bolde, and bachellers noble,
Brekes that batailles *wit* brestez of stedes ;
Sir Boice and his bolde mene myche bale wyrkes !
The Romaynes redyes þane, arrayez þame better,
- The Bretons are
repulsed, and
- 1428 And al to-ruscheez oure mene withe theire ryste horsez,
Arestede of the richeste of þe rounde table,
Over-rydez oure rerewarde, and grette rewthe wyrkes !

- Thane þe Bretons on þe bente habyddez no lengere,
 1432 Bot fleede to þe foreste, and the feelde levede ; fly to the forest.
 Sir Berylle es borne downe and *syr* Boice takenē, Sir Beryllis borne
 The beste of oure bolde mene unblythely wondyde ; down and Sir
 Bot þitt oure stale one a strenghe stotais a lyttile, Bois taken,
 1436 Alle to-stonayedē with þe strokes of þa steryne knyghtez ; but again they
 Made sorowe fore theire soveraygne, that so þare was make a little
 nomene, stand,
 Be-soughte Gode of socure, sende whene hym lykyde ! grieving for the
 Than commez *syr* Idrus, armede up at alle ryghttez, Sir Idrus, with
 1440 Wyth fyve hundrethe mene appone faire stedes, five hundred
 ffraynez faste at oure folke freschely þare aftyre, men, come to
 þif þer frendez ware ferre, þat one the felde foundide. their aid.
 Thane sais *syr* Gawayne, "so me God helpe !
 1444 We hafe bene chased to daye, and chullede as hares, Sir Gawaine la-
 Rebuyked with Romaynes appone þeire ryche stedeز, ments the check
 And we lurkede undyr lee as lowrande wrechēs ! which Arthur's
 I luke never one my lorde þe dayes of my lyfe, men had re-
 1448 And we so lytherly hymehelpe, þat hymeso wele lykede !" ceived.
 Thane the Bretons brothely brochez theire stedeز, The British re-
 And boldly in batelle appone þe bent rydes ; turn to the fray.
 Alle þe ferse mene be-fore frekly ascryes,
 1452 fferkand in þe foreste, to freschene þame selfene ;
 The Romaynes thane redyly arrayes theme bettyre, The Romans pre-
 One rawe on a rowm-felde, reghttez theire wapyns, pare themselves
 By þe ryche revare, and rewles þe pople ; against them.
 1456 And with reddour *syr* Boice es in areste haldene.
 Now thei semblede unsaughte by þe salte strandez ;
 Gladly theis sekere mene settys þeire dynttez,
 With lufly launceز one lofte they luyshene to-gedyres,
 1460 In Lorayne so lordlye on leppande stedes ;
 Thare ware gomes thurghe girde with grundyne wapynes, A fierce battle
 Grisely gayspande with grucchande lotes ! ensucs.
 Grete lordes of Greke greffede so hye ;
 1464 Swyftly with swerdes, they swappene there-aftyre,
 Swappeز doune fullē sweperlye swelltande knynghtez,

- That alle swelltez one swarthe, that they over swyngene,
 Se many sweys in swoghe swounande att ones!
- Sir Gawaine does 1468 Syr Gawayne the gracyous fulle graythelye he wyrkkes,
 mighty deeds of valour. The gretteste he gretez wyth grieslye wondes;
 Wyth Galuth he gyrdez doune fulle galyarde knyghtez,
 ffore greefe of þe grett lorde so grymlye he strykez!
- 1472 He rydez furthe ryallye and redely there-aftyre,
 Thare this reallæ renke was in areste haldene;
 He ryfez ye raunke stele, he ryghttez þeire brenez,
 And reste theme the ryche mane, and rade to his strengthes,
- The Senator Peter 1476 The senatour Petur thane persewede hyme aftyre,
 comes against him, Thurghe þe presse of þe peple, wyth his pryce knyghttes;
 Appertly fore þe prysonere proves his strengthes,
 Wyth prekers the proudeste that to þe presse lengez;
- 1480 Wrothely one the wrange hande syr Gawayne he strykkes,
 Wyth a wapene of were unwynely hyme hittez;
 The breney one þe bakhalf he brystez in sondyre!
 Bot þit he broghte forthe syr Boyce, for alle þeire bale
 he biernez!
- but in spite of 1484 Thane þe Bretones boldely braggene þeire trompppez,
 him Sir Gawaine Rejoiced at this the British press attacks the on more boldly. And fore blysse of syr Boyce was broghte owtte of bandez,
 Boldely in batelle they bere doune knyghtes;
 With brandes of broune stele they brettene maylez;
- 1488 þay stekede stedys in stoure with stelene wapynes,
 And alle stowede wyth strenghe, þat stode theme agaynes!
 Sir Idrus fitz Ewayne þane Arthur ascryeez,
 Assemblez one þe senatour wyth sextene knyghttez,
- 1492 Of þe sekereste mene þat to oure syde lengede;
 Sodanly in a soppe they sette in att ones,
 ffoynes faste att þe fore breste with flawmande swerdez,
 And feghttes faste att þe fronte freschely þare aftyre;
- 1496 ffelles fele on þe felde appone þe ferrere syde,
 ffey on þe faire felde by þa fresche strandez;
 Bot syr Idrus fytz Ewayne anters hyme selvene,
 And entters in anly, and egyrly strykez,
- 1500 Sekez to þe senatour and sesez his brydille,

Unsaughtely he saide hym these fittande wordez,—

“ȝelde þe, *syr*, ȝapely, ȝife þou þi lyfe ȝerneȝ,
ffore gyfteȝ þat þow gyffe may, þou ȝeme now þe selfene ;

and takes him
prisoner.

1504 ffore dredlez dreche þow, or droppe any wyleȝ,
Thow salle dy þis daye thorow dyntt of my handez !”

“ I ascente,” *quod* þe senatour, “ so me Criste helpe !

So þat I be safe broghte before the kynge selvene ;

The Senator de-
sires to be
brought to the
king.

1508 Raunsone me resonabyllye, as I may over reche,
Aftyre my renttez in Rome may redyly forthire.”

Thane answers *syr* Idrus with austeryne wordez,

Sir Idrus answers
him roughly.

“ Thow salle hafe condycyone, as the kynge lykes,

1512 Whene thow comes to þe kyth there the courte haldez ;
In caase his concelle bee to kepe the no langere,
To be killyde at his commandment his knyghttez be-fore.”
ȝayledde hym furthe in þe rowte, and lached ofe his wedes,

1516 Lefte hym wyth Lyonelle, and Lowelle hys brothire,
O-lawe in þe launde þane, by þe lythe strandez.

He gives the
Senator into the
charge of Sir
Lionel and Sir
Lowell.

Sir Lucius legge-mene loste are fore ever !

The senatour Petur es prysoner takyne !

1520 Of Perce and of Porte Jaffe fulle many price knyghtez,
And myche pople wyth alle, perischede þame selfene !
ffor presse of þe passage, they plungeded at oneȝ !
Thare myghte mene see Romayneȝ rewfully wondyde,

Many of the
Romans are
slain.

1524 Over-redyne with renkes of the round table !

In þe raikē of þe furthe they rightene theire brenys,

þat rane alle one reede blode redylye alle over ;

They raughte in þe rerewarde fulle ryotous knyghtez,

1528 ffor raumsone of rede golde and realle stedys ;

Radly relayes, and restez theire horseȝ,

In rowtte to þe ryche kynge they rade al at oneȝ.

A knyghte cayrez be-fore, and to þe kynge telles,—

The knights ride
back towards the
king, and send
him the news of
their success.

1532 “ Sir, here commez thy messangereȝ with myrtheȝ fro
þe mountez,

ȝay hafe bene machede to daye with mene of þe marchez,
ffore-maglede¹ in þe marras with mervailous knyghtez !

¹ Halliwell reads “ fore manglede.”

They tell him
that they have
slain fifty thou-
sand men,

We hafe foughtene in faithe, by 3one fresche strandez,
1536 With þe frekkeste folke that to þi foo langez;
ffyfty thosaunde one felde of ferse mene of armez,
Wyth-in a furlange of waye, fay ere by-lefede!
We hafe eschewede þis chekke, thurgh the chance of oure
Lorde,

and taken pri-
soners the chief
Chancellor and
the Senator Pe-
ter, as well as
many paynims.

1540 Of tha chevalrous mene that chargede thy people!
The cheefe chaunchelere of Rome, a cheftayne full noble,
Wille aske þe chartyre of pesse for charitee hym selfene;
And the senatour Petire to presone es takyne.

1544 Of Perse and of Porte Jaffe Paynymmez ynewe
Comez prekande in the presse, with thy prysse knyghttez,
With poverté in thi presone theire paynez to drye;
I be-seke 3ow, sir, say whate 3owe lykes,

Arthur may de-
mand sixty
horse-loads of
silver for the
Senator,

1548 Whethire 3e suffyre theme saughte, or sone delyverde:
3e may have fore þe senatour sextie horse chargede
Of silver be Seterdaye, full sekyrly payede,
And for þe cheefe chauncelere, þe chevalere noble,

and for the Chan-
cellor, chariots
full of gold.

1552 Charottes chokkefull charegyde with golde;
The remenaunt of þe Romayne be in areste haldene,
Tille thiére renttez in Rome be rightewissly knawene.
I be-seke 3ow, sir, certyfye 3one lordez,

The other pri-
soners may be
kept until their
rents are known.

1556 3if 3e wille send þame over þe see, or kepe þame 3ourselfene:
Alle 3our sekyre mene forsothe sounde are by-levyde,
Save syr Ewayne fytz Henry es in þe side wonddede."
"Crist be thankyde," quod the kyng, "and hys clere
modityre,

All Arthur's men
had escaped, save
Sir Ewayne, who
was wounded.

The king rejoices.

1560 That 3owe comforthede and helpede be crafte of hyme
selfene;

The fate of battle,
he says, is in the
hands of God.

Skilfull skomfytüre he skifte as hym lykez,
Is none so skathlye may skape, ne skewe fro his handes;
Desteny and doughtynes of dedys of armes,

1564 Alle es demyd and delte at Dryghtynez wille!

He thanks the
knight for his
tidings, and gives
him for reward
the city of Tho-
louse.

I kwe the thanke for thy come, it comfortes us alle!
Sir knyghte," sais þe conquerour, "so me Criste helpe!
I 3if the for thy thy3andez Tolouse þe riche,

- 1568 The tolle and þe tachmentez, tavernez and oþer,
 The towne and the tenementez with towrez so hye,
 That towchez to the temperaltee, whilles my tyme lastez :
 Bot say to the senatour I sende hyme þes wordez,
- 1572 Thare salle no silver hym save, bot Ewayne recovere ;
 I had lever see hym synke one the salte strandez,
 Than the seegge ware seke, þat es so sore woundede ;
 I salle dissevere that sorte, so me Criste helpe !
- 1576 And sett theme fulle solytarie, in sere kynggez landez :
 Salle he never sownde see his seynowres in Rome,
 Ne sitt in þe assemblé, in syghte wyth his feris ;
 ffor it comes to no kyng þat conquerour es holdene,
- 1580 To comone with his captifis fore covatys of silver :
 It come never of knyghthede, knawe it ȝif hyme lyke,
 To carpe of coseri, whene captyfis ere takyne ;
 It aughte to no presoners to prese no lordez,
- 1584 Ne comein presens of prynceþ, whene partyes are movede :
 Comaunde ȝone constable, þe castelle þat ȝemes,
 That he be clenlyche kepede, and in close haldene ;
 He salle have maundement to morne or myddaye be
 roungeþ,
- 1588 To what marche þay salle merke, with mangere to lengene.”
 þay convaye this captyfe with clene mene of armez,
 And kend hym to þe constable, alles þe kyng byddeþ ;
 And seyne to Arthure þey ayre, and egerly hym towchez
- 1592 The answer of þe emperour, irows of dedez.
 Thane syr Arthure one erthe, atheliste of oþere,
 At evene at his awene borde avantid his lordez,—
 “Me aughte to honour theme in erthe over alle oþer
 thynggez,
- 1596 þat þus in myne absens awnters þeme selfene ;
 I salle theme luffe whylez I lyffe, so me our Lorde helpe !
 And gyfe þeme landys fulle large, whare theme beste
 lykes ;
 Thay salle noghte lesse, one þis layke, ȝif me lyfe happene,
- 1600 þat þus are lamede for my lufe be þis lythe strandez.”

The Senator shall
not be ransomed
save Sir Ewayne
recovers.

The others shall
be divided into
different coun-
tries.

Arthur holds that
to accept ransom
becomes not a
king.

They are to take
the Senator to
the Constable and
bid him keep him
safe.

The knights
obey, and then
return to Arthur
to give him the
Emperor's mes-
sage.

Arthur greatly
commends his
knights for their
boldness, and
promises them
rewards.

In the morning
Sir Cador and his
knights are bid
to take the pri-
soners

- Bot in þe clere daweyng, þe dere kyng hyme selfene
Comaundyð *syr* Cadore with his dere knyghttes,
Sir Cleremus, sir Cleremonde, with clene mene of armez,
1604 Sir Clowdmur, *syr* Clegis, to conuaye theis lordez ;
Sir Boyce and *syr* Berelle with baners displayede,
Sir Bawdwyne, *syr* Bryane, and *syr* Bedwere the ryche,
Sir Raynalde and *syr* Richere, Rawlaundes childyre,
1608 To ryde with þe Romaynes in rowte wyth their feres.

to Paris, and to
give them into
the care of the
Provost.

- “Prekez now preualye to Paris the ryche,
Wyth Petir the pryssonere and his price knyghttez ;
Be-teche þam þe proveste, in presens of lordez,
1612 O payne and o perelle þat pendes there too,
That they be weisely wachede and in warde holdene,
Wardede of warantizez with wyrchipulle knyghttez ;
Wagge hyme wyghte mene, and woonde for no silvyre ;
1616 I haffe warnede þat wy, be ware ȝife hyme lykes !”

The British
knights depart
towards Chartres.

- Now bownes þe Bretones, als þe kyng byddez,
Buskez their batelles, their baners displayez ;
To-wardez Chartris they chese, these chevalrous
knyghttez,

But the Emperor
had dispatched a
chosen band to
intercept them.

- 1620 And in the champayne lande fulle faire þay eschewede :
ffor þe emperour of myghte had ordande hym selfene
Sir Utolfe and sir Ewandyre, two honourable kynges,
Erles of þe Orient, with austeryne knyghttez,
1624 Of þe awntrouseste mene þat to his oste lengede,
Sir Sextynour of Lyby and Senatours many,
The kyng of Surrye hym-selfe with Sarazynes ynewe,
The senatour of Sutere wyth sowmes fulle huge,
1628 Whas assygnede to þat courte be sent of his peres,
Traise to-warde Troys þe tresone to wyrke,
To hafe be-trappede with a trayne oure travelande
knyghttez,
That hade persayfede þat Peter at Parys sulde lenge,
1632 In personne with þe provoste, his paynez to drye.
ffor-thi they buskede theme bownne with baners dis-
playede,

In the buskayle of his waye, on blonkkes fulle hugge ; They take up a position in the path of Arthur's men.

1636 To pyke up þe presoners fro oure pryse knyghttez.

Syr Cadore of Cornewalle comaundeþ his peris,
Sir Clegis, *syr* Cleremus, *syr* Cleremownde þe noble,

“Here es þe close of Clyme with clewes so hye ;

Sir Cadore keeps a sharp look out,

1640 Lokez the contree be clere, the corners are large ;

Discoueres now sekerly skrogges and oþer,

That no skathelle in þe skroggez skorne us here aftyre ;

Loke ȝe skyste it so þat us no skathe lympe,

1644 ffor na skomfitoure in skoulkery is skomfite ever.”

Now they hye to þe holte, thes harageous knyghttez,
To herkene of þe hye mene to helpene theis lordez ;
ffyndez theme helmede hole and horsesyde on stedys,

and discovers the enemy, armed and mounted, waiting by the skirts of a wood.

1648 Hovande one þe hye waye by þe holte hemmes.

With knyghttly contenaunce Sir Clegis hym selfene

Kryes to þe compayne, and carpes thees wordez,—

“Es there any kyde knyghte, kaysere or oþer,

Sir Clegis challenges any knight among them to the combat.

1652 Wille kyth for his kyngþe lufe craftes of armes ?

We are comene fro the kyng of þis lythe ryche,

That knawene es for conquerour, corownde in erthe,

His ryche retenuz here alle of his round table,

1656 To ryde with þat realle in rowtte where hym lykes ;

We seke justynges of werre, ȝif any wille happyne,

Of þe jolyeste mene a-juggede be lordes ;

If here be any hathelle mane, erle or oþer,

1660 That for þe emperour lufe wille awntere hym-selfene.”

And ane erle þane in angerd answeres hym sone,—

“Me angers at Arthure, and att his hathelle bierns,

An earl of the Roman party upbraids Arthur and his knights.

That thus in his errour occupyes theis rewmes ;

1664 And owtrayes þe emperour, his erthely lorde !

The araye and þe ryalltez of þe rounde table

Es wyth rankour rehersed in rewmes fulle many ;

Of oure renttez of Rome syche revelle he haldys,

1668 Ne salle ȝife resoun fulle rathe, ȝif us reghte happene,

Sir Clegis glori-
fies Arthur,

That many salle repente that in his rowtte rydez,
ffor the reklesse roy so rewlez hym-selfene!"

"A!" sais *syr* Clegis þane, "so me Criste helpe!

1672 I knawe be thi carpyng a cowntere þe semes!

Bot be þou auditoure or erle, or emperour thi-selfene,
Appone Arthurez by-halve I answere the sone:

The renke so realle, þat rewleze us alle,

1676 The ryotous mene and þe ryche of þe rounde table,
He has araysede his accownte, and redde alle his rollez,
ffor he wyлле gyfe a rekenyng that rewe salle aftyre,
That alle þe ryche salle repente þat to Rome langez,

1680 Or þe rereage be requit of rentez þat he claymez!

We crafe of þour curtaisie three coursez of werre,
And claymez of knyghthode, take kepe to þour selfene!
ʒe do bott trayne us to daye wyth trefelande wordez!

1684 Of syche *travaylande* mene trecherye me thynkes!

Sende owte sadly certayne knyghtez,

Or say me sekerly sothe, for sake ʒif þowe lykes."

Tthane sais þe kyng of Surry, "Alls save me oure Lorde!

1688 ʒif þow hufe alle þe daye, þou bees noghte delyverede,

Bot thow sekerly ensure with certeyne knyghtez,
þat þi cote and thi breste be knawene *with* lordez,
Of armes of ancestrye entyrde *with* londez."

1692 "Sir kyng," sais *syr* Clegys, "fulle knyghttly þow
askez:

Sir Clegis replies
scornfully that
his ancestors
were at the siege
of Troy.

I trowe it be for cowardys thow carpes thes wordez:
Myne armez are of ancestrye enveryde with lordez,
And has in banere bene borne sene *syr* Brut tyme;

1696 At the cité of Troye þat tymme was ensegede,

Ofte seene in asawte with certayne knyghttez,
ffro þe Borghte broghte us and alle oure bolde elders,
To Bretayne þe braddere, with-in chippe-burdez."

1700 "Sir," sais *syr* Sextenour, "saye what þe lykez,

And we salle suffyre the, als us beste semes;
Luke thi troumppez be trussede, and trefulle no lengere,
ffor þoghe þou tarye alle þe daye, the tyddes no bettyr!

and boasts that
he will punish
well the Romans.

He desires three
courses of war
with any knights
whom they will
send.

The King of Syria
insinuates that
Sir Clegis may
not be of noble
ancestry.

Sir Sextemour
declares that the
Romans are
ready for the
fray.

- 1704 ffor there salle never Romaine, þat in my rowt rydez,
Be *with* rebawdez rebuykyde, whills I in werlde regne!"
Thane *syr* Clegis to þe kynge a lyttill enclinede,
Kayres to *syr* Cadore, and knyghtly hym tellez,—
- 1708 "We have foundene in þone firthe, floreschede with leves,
þe flour of þe faireste folke þat to þi foo langez,
fifty thosandez of folke of ferse mene of armez,
þat faire are fewteride on frounte undyr þone fre-bowes;
1712 They are enbuschede one blonkkes, with baners displayede,
In þone bechene wode appone the waye sydes;
Thay hafe the furthe forsette alle of þe faire watyre,
That fayfully of force feghte us byhowys;
- 1716 ffor thus us schappes to daye, schortly to telle,
Whedyre we schone or schewe, schyst as þe lykes."
"Nay," *quod* Cadore, "so me Criste helpe!
It ware schame þat we scholde schone for so lytylle!
- 1720 Sir Lancelott salle never laughe, þat with þe kyng
lengez,
That I sulde lette my waye for lede appone erthe;
I salle be dede and undone ar I here dreche,
ffor drede of any dogge-sonne in þone dyme schawes!"
- 1724 **S**yr Cadore thane knyghtly comforthes his pople,
And with corage kene he karpes þes wordes,—
"Thynk one þe valyaunt prynce þat vesettez us ever,
With landez and lordscheppez, whare us beste lykes;
- 1728 That has us ducheres delte, and dubbyde us knyghttez,
Gifene us gersoms and golde, and gardwynes many;
Grewhoundes and grett horse, and alkyne gamnes,
That gaynez tille any gome, that undyre God benez;
- 1732 Thynke one riche renoune of þe rounde table,
And late it never be refte us fore Romaine in erthe;
ffeyne þow noghte feyntly, ne frythes no wapyns,
Bot luke þe fyghte faythefully, frekes þour-selfene;
- 1736 I walde be wellyde alle qwyke, and quarterde in sondre,
Bot I wyrke my dede, whills I in wrethe lenge."

Sir Clegis tells
Sir Cadore that a
vast number of
the enemy are
drawn up in the
wood,

and suggests a
retreat.

Sir Cadore scorns
to retreat.

Never shall Sir
Lancelot laugh
at him.

He will die be-
fore he turn back
for any dog's son
of them all.

Sir Cadore exhorts
his men, and tells
them of the good
deeds of Arthur.

He dubs some of
them knights.

Than this doughtty duke dubbyd his knyghttez,
Joneke and Askanere, Aladuke and oþer,

1740 That ayerez were of Esexe, and alle þase este marchez;
Howelle and Hardelfe, happy in armez,
Sir Herylle and sir Herygalle, þise harageouse knyghttez:
Than the soverayne assignede certayne lordez,

To certain of
them he gives
the prisoner in
charge.

1744 Sir Wawayne, syr Uryelle, Sir Bedwere þe riche,
Raynalde and Richeere, and Rowlandez childyre,—
“Takez kepe one this prynce with þoure price knyghtez,
And þife we in þe stour withstondene the better,

If he is defeated,
they are to con-
vey him to some
castle, or to Ar-
thur.

1748 Standez here in this stede, and stirrez no forthire;
And þif þe chaunce falle þat we bee over-charggede,
Eschewes to some castelle, and chewyse þour-selfene;
Or ryde to þe riche kyng þif þow roo happyne,

The British pre-
pare for the fight.

1752 And bidde hym come redily to rescewe hys biernez.”
And than the Bretons brothely enbrassez þeire scheldez,
Braydez one bacenetez, and buskes theire launcez.
Thus he fittez his folke, and to þe felde rydez,

The fight begins.

1756 fiff hundreth one a frounte fewtrede at onez!
With trompes þay trine, and trappede stedes,
With cornettes and clarions, and clergialle notes;
Schokkes in with a schakke, and schontez no langere,

The King of Lebe
leads on the
enemy.

1760 There schawes ware scheene undyr þe schire eynez.
And thane the Romayne rowtte remowes a lyttille,
Raykes with a rerewarde þas realle knyghttez;
So raply þay ryde thare, that alle þe rowte rynggez,
1764 Of ryves and raunke stele, and ryche golde maylez;
Thane schotte owtte of þe schawe schiltrounis many,
With scharpe wapynes of ware schotande at ones:

He attacks Sir
Beryll and slays
him.

The kyng of Lebe be-fore the wawarde he ledez,
1768 And alle his lele lige mene o laundone ascriez:
Thane this cruelle kyng castis in fewtire,
Kaghte hym a coverde horse, and his course haldez,
Beris to syr Berille, and brathely hym hittes,
1772 Throwghe golet and gorgere he hurtez hym ewyne!
The gome and þe grette horse at þe grounde liggez,

- And gretez graythely to Gode, and gyffes hym þe saule !
 Thus es Berelle the bolde broghte owtte of lyve,
- 1776 And byddez aftyre Beryelle, þat hym beste lykez.
 And thane *syr* Cador of Cornewayle es carefullē in herte, Sir Cador is overwhelmed with grief for his loss.
 Be-cause of his kynyse mane, þat þus es myscaryede ;
 Umbeclappes the cors, and kyssez hyme ofte,
- 1780 Gerte kepe hym coverte *with* his clere knyghttez.
 Thane laughs the Lebe kyngē, and alle on lowde meles, — The King of Lebe ridicules him.
 “ʒone lorde es lyghttede ! me lykes the bettyre !
 He salle noghte dere us to daye, the devyll have [his]
 bones !”
- 1784 “ʒone kyngē,” said Cador, “karpes fullē large,
 Be-cause he killyd þis kene ; Criste hafe þi saule !
 He salle hafe corne bote, so me Criste helpe ! Sir Cador vows vengeance.
 Or I kaire of þis coste, we salle encontre ones !
- 1788 So may þe wynde weile turne, I quytte hym or ewyne,
 Sothely hym selfene, or summe of his ferez !”
 Thane *syr* Cador þe kene knyghttly he wyrkez,
 Cryez, “A ! Cornewale,” and castez in fewtere,
- 1792 Girdez streke thourghe þe stour on a stede ryche ! He enacts great deeds of valour.
 Many steryne mane he steride by strenghe of hyme one !
 Whene his spere was sprongene, he spede hym fullē ʒerne, When his lance is broken he fights with his sword.
 Swappede owtte *with* a swerde, that swykede hym never,
- 1796 Wroghte wayes fullē wyde, and wounded knyghttez ;
 Wyrkez his in wayfare fullē werkand sydez,
 And hewes of þe hardieste halsez in sondyre,
 That alle blendez with blode thare his blanke rynnez !
- 1800 So many biernez the bolde broughte owt of lyfe,
 Tittez tirauntez doune, and temez theire sadilles,
 And turnez owte of þe toile, whene hym tyme thynkkez !
 Thane the Lebe kyngē criez fullē lowde Then the King of Lebe ironically praises his deeds.
- 1804 One *syr* Cador the kene, *with* cruellē wordez,
 Thowe hase wyrehipe wonne, and wondyde knyghttez !
 Thowe wenes fore thi wightenez the werlde es thynowene !
 I salle wayte at thyne honnde, wy, be my trowthe !
- 1808 I have warnede þe wele, beware ʒif the lykez !”

The new-made
knights, with
sound of trum-
pets and spears
in rest, rush to
the fray.

With cornuse and clariones þeis newe made knyghttez
Lythes un-to þe crye, and castez in fewtire;
fferkes in one a ffrounte one fferaunte stede,
1812 fellede at þe fyrste come fyfty att ones!

Schotte thorowe the schiltrouns, and scheverede launcez,
Laid doun in þe lumppe lordly biernez!

And thus nobilly oure newe mene notez þeire strenghez.

1816 Bot new notte es onone þat noyes me sore;

The King of Lebe
comes against
them.

The kynge of Lebe has laughte a stede þat hym lykede,
And comes in lordely in lyonez of silvere,
Umbelappez þe lumpe, and lattes in sondre;

1820 Many lede with his launce þe liffe has he refede!

He makes great
havoc among the
new men.

Thus he chaces þe childire of þe kyngez chambire,
And killez in þe champanyse chevalrous knyghttez!
With a chasynye spere he choppes doun many!

1824 Thare was *syr* Alyduke slayne, and Achinour wondyde,
Sir Origge and *syr* Ermyngalle hewene al to pecez!
And ther was Lewlyne laughte, and Lewlyns brothire,
With lordez of Lebe, and lede to þeire strenghez:

Had not Sir
Clegis and Sir
Clement come,
the new men had
gone to nought.

1828 Ne hade *syr* Clegis comene, and Clemente þe noble,
Oure newe mene hade gone to noghte, and many ma oþer.

Thane sir Cador the kene castez in fewtire

Then Sir Cador
puts his lance in
rest, and strikes
the King of Lebe
fair on the hel-
met.

A cruelle launce and a kene, and to þe kynge rydez,

1832 Hittez hym heghe one the helme with his harde wapene,
That alle the hotte blode of hym to his hande rynnez!

The heathen king
falls to the
ground mortally
wounded.

The hethene harageous kynge appone þe hethe lyggez,
And of his hertly hurte helyde he never!

1836 Thane *syr* Cador þe kene cryez fulle lowde,—

Sir Cador tri-
umphs over him.

“Thow has corne botte, *syr* kynge, þare God gyfe þe
sorowe,

Thow killyde my cosyne, my kare es the lesse!

Kele the nowe in the claye, and comforthe thi selfene!

1840 Thow skornede us langere with thi skornefulle wordez,
And nowe has þow chevede soo; it es thyne awene skathe!
Holde at þow hente has, it harmez bot lyttill,
ffor hethynge es hame holde, use it who so wille.”

- 1844 **T**he kyng of Surry þane es sorowfulle in herte,
 ffor sake of this soveraygne, þat þus was supprisede ;
 Semblede his Sarazenes, and senatours manye :
 Unsaughtly þey sette thane appone oure sere knyghttez ;
- 1848 Sir Cadore of Cornewaile he cownterez theme sone,
 With his kydde companye clenlyche arrayede ;
 In the frount of þe fyrthe, as þe waye forthis,
 ffyfty thosande of folke was fellide at ones !
- 1852 Thare was at þe assemblé certayne knyghttez,
 Sore wondede sone appone sere halves ;
 The sekereste Sarzanez that to þat sorte lengede,
 Be-hynde the sadylls ware sette sex fotte large ;
- 1856 They scherde in the schiltrone scheldyde knyghttez,
 Schalkes they schotte thrughe schrenkande maylez,
 Thurghe brenys browdene brestez they thirlede,
 Brasers burnyste bristez in sondyre ;
- 1860 Blasons blode and blankes they hewene,
 With brandez of browne stele brankkand stede ;
 The Bretones brothely brittenez so many,
 The bente and þe brode felde alle one blode rynnys !
- 1864 Be thane *syr* Cayous þe kene a capitayne has wonnene,
 Sir Clegis clynges in, and clekes anoþer ;
 The capitayne of Cordewa, undire þe kyng selfene,
 That was keye of þe kythe of alle þat coste ryche,
- 1868 Utolfe and Ewandre, Joneke had nommene,
 With þe erle of Affryke and oþer grette lordes.
The kyng of Surry the kene to *syr* Cadore es zeldene,
 The Synechalle of Sotere to Segramoure hym selfene.
- 1872 When þe chevalrye saw their cheftanes were nommene,
 To a cheefe foreste they chesene their wayes,
 And feled theme so feynte, they falle in þe greves,
 In the ferynne of þe fyrthe, fore ferde of oure pople.
- 1876 Thare myght mene see the ryche ryde in the schawes,
 To rype up the Romayne ruydlyche wondyde !
 Schowttes aftyre mene, harageous knyghttez,
 Be hundreth they hewede doun be þe holte eynys !

The King of Syria, full of grief, assembles his Saracens for vengeance.

Sir Cadore and his men slay fifty thousand of them at once.

Certain knights are wounded by Saracens riding behind others.

The fight rages furiously.

The field runs blood.

Sir Clegis takes prisoner the Captain of Cordova.

Sir Cadore takes the King of Syria.

The Romans fly into the forest.

Arthur's men slay many of them there.

- A few escape to a castle.
- 1880 Thus oure chevalrous mene chasez þe pople ;
To a castelle they eschewed a fewe þat eschappede.
Thane relyez þe renkez of þe rounde table,
ffor to ryotte þe wode, þer þe duke restez ;
- Arthur's knights seek for their companions who had been slain. Sir Cador bids them carry them to the King.
- 1884 Ransakes the ryndez alle, raughte up theire feres,
That in þe fightyng be-fore fay ware by-levyde.
Sir Cador garte chare theym, and covere theme faire,
Kariede theme to the kyng with his beste knyghttez ;
- He goes to Paris with the prisoners, and quickly returns to Arthur.
- 1888 And passez un-to Paresche with prasoners hym-selfene,
Betoke theyme the proveste, prynceez and oþer ;
Tase a sope in the toure, and taryez no langere,
Bot tournes tytte to þe kyng, and hym wyth tunge telles.
- Then he tells him of the case that had befallen.
- 1892 “Syr,” sais *syr* Cador, “a caas es be-fallene ;
We hafe cownterede to day, in ʒone coste ryche.
With kynggez and kayseres, krouelle and noble,
And knyghtes and kene men clenlych arayed !
- They had fought and slain many.
- 1896 Thay hade at ʒone foreste forsette us þe wayes,
At the furthe in þe fyrthe, with ferse mene of armes ;
Thare faughtte we in faythe, and foynede with sperys,
One felde with thy foo mene, and fellyd theme on lyfe.
- Divers of their best knights were taken prisoners,
- 1900 The kyng of Lebe es laide, and in þe felde levyde,
And manye of his lege mene þat þere to hym langede !
Oþer lordez are laughte of uncouth ledes ;
We hafe lede them at lenge, to lyf whilles þe lykez.
- the Senator Barouns, the King of Syria, the Seneschall of Suters.
- 1904 Sir Utere and *syr* Ewaynedyre, theishonourable knyghttez,
Be an awntere¹ of armes Joneke has nommene,
With erlez of þe Oryentte, and austerene knyghttez,
Of awncestrye þe beste mene þat to þe oste langede ;
- 1908 The senatour Barouns es kaughttē with a knyghtte,
The capitayne of Cornette, that crewelle es haldene,
The syneschalle of Suters unsaughte wyth þes oþer,
The kyng of Surry hym-selfene, and Sarazenes.
- But of Arthur's knights fourteen were slain.
- 1912 Bot fay of ours in þe felde a fourtene knyghttez,
I wille noghte feyne ne forbere, but faythfully tellene^a
Sir Berellē es one, a banerette noble,
- Sir Beryl was killed at the first

¹ Written in MS. a *nawntere*.

- Was killyde at þe fyrste come with a kynge ryche ;
 1916 Sir Alidoyke of Towelle, *with* his tende knyghtez,
 Emange þe Turkys was tynte, and in tyme fondene ;
 Gude sir Mawrelle of Mauncez, and Mawrene his broþer,
 Sir Meneduke of Mentoche, *with* mervailous knyghttez."
- 1920 **T**hane the worthy kynge wrythes, and wepede *with* his engne,
 Karpes to his cosyne *syr* Cador theis wordez,—
 "Sir Cador, thi corage confunde us alle !
 Kowardely thow castez owtte alle my beste knyghttez !
 1924 To putte mene in perille, it es no pryce holdene,
 Bot þe pertyes ware purvayede, and powere arayede ;
 When they ware stade on a strenghe, þou sulde hafe *with*-stondene,
 Bot ȝif thowe wolde alle my steryne stroye for þe nonys !"
 1928 "Sir," sair *syr* Cador, "ȝe knowe wele ȝourselvene ;
 ȝe are kynge in this kythe, karpe whatte ȝow lykys !
 Salle never upbrayde me, þat to þi burde langes,
 That I sulde blyne for theire boste, thi byddyng to wyrche ;
 1932 Whene any stirttez to stale, stuffe þame þe bettere,
 Ore thei wille be stonayede, and stroyede in ȝone strayte
 londez.
 I dide my delygens to daye, I doo me one lordez,
 And in daungere of dede fore dyverse knyghttez,
 1936 I hafe no grace to þi gree, bot syche grett wordez ;
 ȝif I heven my herte, my hape es no bettyre."
 ȝofe *syr* Arthure ware angerde, he ansuers faire,
 "Thow has doughttily donne, *syr* duke, *with* thi handez,
 1940 And has donne thy dever with my dere knyghttez ;
 ffor-thy thow arte demyde, *with* dukes and erlez,
 ffor one of þe doughtyeste þat dubbede was ever !
 Thare es none ischewe of us, on this erthe sprongene ;
 1944 Thow arte apparant to be ayere, are one of thi chilydre ;
 Thow arte my sister sone, for-sake salle I never !"
Thane gerte he in his awene tente a table be sette,
 And tryede in *with* trompez *travaillede* biernez ;
 1948 Serfede them solempnely *with* selkouthe metez,

beginning of the
fray.

Then Arthur was
grieved,

and speaks to his
cousin Sir Cador
bitter words.

Sir Cador replies
with dignity.

He had only done
his duty,

but is ill repaid
by such hard
words.

Then Arthur re-
tracts.
Heacknowledges
Cador had done
his devoir.

He was one of
the bravest of the
brave,

and heir apparent
to the throne.
Therefore he
would never for-
sake him.

Then he makes a
noble feast in his
own tent for the
knights who had
been engaged in
the fight.

But the Senators
of Rome tell the
Emperor of the
defeat of his men.

1952 Swythe semly in syghte with sylverene dischees.
Whene the senatours harde saye þat it so happenede,
They saide to þe emperour, "thi seggez are suppryssede!
Sir Arthure, thyne enmy has owterayedede þi lordez,
That rode for þe rescowe of þone riche knyghttez!
Thow dosse bot tynnez þi tyme, and turmenttez þi pople;
Thow arte be-trayedede of þi mene, that moste thow on
traystede.

He had been be-
trayed by those
he trusted most.

Then the Em-
peror is very
wroth.

1956 That schalle turne the to tene and torfere for ever."
Than the emperour irus was angerde at his herte,
ffor oure valyant biernez siche prowesche had wonnene.
With kyngge and with kaysere to consayle they wende,
1960 Soverayngez of Sarazenez, and senatours manye;
Thus he semblez fulle sone certayne lordez,
And in the assemble thane he sais them theis wordez,—

He assembles a
council of war.

He tells them his
purpose to go
into Saxony,

1964 "My herte sothely es sette, assente þif þowe lykes,
To seke into Sexone, with my sekyre knyghttez,
To fyghte with my foo mene, if fortune me happene,
þif I may fynde the freke with-in the foure halvez;
Or entire in-to Awguste awnters to seke,
1968 And byde with my balde mene with-in þe burghe ryche;
Riste us and revelle, and ryotte oure selfene,
Lende þare in delytte in lordechippez ynewe,
To syr Leo be comene with alle his lele knyghtez,
1972 With lordez of Lumberdye, to lette hyme the wayes."

and enter into
Augusta,

to riot and revel
till the arrival of
Sir Leo and the
Lords of Lom-
bardy.

King Arthur, get-
ting intelligence
of this, with-
draws his men
secretly by the
woods;

Bot owre wyese kyng es warre to wayttene his renkes,
And wyesly by þe woddez voydez his oste;
Gerte felschene his fyrez, flawmande fulle heghe,
1976 Trussene fulle traystely, and treunt there aftyre.
Seþene into Sessoyne, he soughte at the gayneste,
And at the surs of þe sonne disseverez his knyghttez:
fforsette theme the cite appone sere halfez,

takes the short-
est road into
Saxony;

suddenly attacks
the city with
seven bands.

Sir Valiant makes
a vow to van-
quish the Vis-
count of Rome.

1980 So-daynly on iche halfe, with sevene grett stales.
Anely in the vale a vawewarde enbusches;
Sir Valyant of Vyleris, with valyant knyghttez,
Be-fore þe kynggez visage made siche avowez,

- 1984 To venquyse by victorie the vescuonte of Rome !
ffor-thi the kyng chargez hym, what chaunce so be-falle,
Cheftayne of the cheekke, with chevalrous knyghttez, The King gives
And sythyne meles with mouthe, þat he moste traystez : him command of
the vanguard ;
- 1988 Demenys the medylwarde menskfully hym selfene,
fittes his fote-mene, alles hym faire thynkkes ;
On frounte in the fore breste, the flour of his knyghtez,
His archers on aythere halfe he ordaynede þer-aftyre he himself directs
the centre.
- 1992 To schake in a sheltrone, to schotte whene þame lykez ; He arranges the
archers on either
flank,
He arrayed in þe rerewarde fulle rialle knyghtez, Places renowned
knights for a
rearguard.
With renkkes renownd of þe rounde table,
Sir Raynalde, sir Richere, that rade was never,
- 1996 The riche Duke of Rowne wyt ryders ynewe ;
Sir Cayous, sir Clegis, and clene mene of armes,
The kyng castes to kepe be þaa clere strands.
Sir Lott and syr Launcelott, þise lordly knyghttez, Sir Lott and Sir
Lancelot com-
mand a band on
the left hand,
2000 Salle lenge on his lefte hande, wyth legyones ynewe,
To meve in þe morne, while ȝif þe myste happynne ;
Sir Cadour of Cornewaille, and his kene knyghtez,
To kepe at þe Karfuke, to close in ther opere : which is to move
in the mist of
early morning.
- 2004 He plantez in siche placez prynce and erlez,
That no powere sulde passe be no prevé wayes. Sir Cadour and his
men are to keep
guard over the
passes.
- Bot the emperour onone, with honourable knyghtez
and erlez, enteres the vale, awnters to seke, The Emperour and
his knights
quickly enter the
vale in search of
adventures.
- 2008 And fyndez sir Arthure with hostez arayede ;
And at his in-come, to ekkene his sorowe,
Oure burlyche bolde kyng appone the bente howes,
With his bataile one brede, and baners displayede. He finds Arthur's
host drawn up in
battle array,
- 2012 He hade þe ceté for-sett appone sere halves,
Bothe the clewez and þe clyfez with clene mene of armez !
The mosse and þe marrasse, the mounttez so hye,
With gret multytude of mene, to marre hym in þe wayes. and all the posi-
tions occupied.
- 2016 Whene syr Lucius sees, he sais to his lordez,
“ This traytour has truaunt¹ this tresone to wyrche !
He has the ceté forsette appone sere halfez, Then Sir Lucius
declares with

¹ Or treunt.

wrath that there
is no way else but
to fight, for fly
he may not.

He arrays his
rich Romans.
The Viscount is
in the van.

Hoists his stand-
ard, the golden
dragon enamelled
with eagles.

They drink and
make merry.

Sir Lucius ex-
horts them to
think on the
great renown of
Rome—how it
had conquered all
Christendom,

and all the land
of the Saracens,
from Jaffa to the
gates of Paradise.

Without doubt
they will quickly
reduce these
rebels.

Arthur calls upon
the Viscount of
Valence, and
threatens him
with vengeance.

The Viscount
boldly prepares
for the fray.

- Alle þe clewez and the cleyffez *with* clene mene of armez !
 2020 Here es no waye i-wys, ne no wytt elles,
 Bot feghte with oure foo-mene, for flee may we never !
 Thane this ryche mane rathe arayes his byernez,
 Rowlede his Romayne, and reallē knyghtez ;
 2024 Buschez in the avawmewarde the vescounte of Rome,
 ffro Viterbe to Venyse, theis valyante knyghtez :
 Dresses up dredfully the dragone of golde,
 With egles al-over, enamelede of sable ;
 2028 Drawene dreghely the wyne, and drynkyne thereaftyre,
 Dukkez and dusseperez, dubbede knyghtez,
 ffor dauncesyngē of Duche-mene, and dynnyngē of pypez,
 Alle dynned fore dyne that in þe dale hovede.
 2032 **A**nd thane *syr* Lucius on lowde said lordlyche wordez,
 “Thynke one the myche renownne of *your* ryche
 fadyrs ;
 And the riatours of Rome, þat regnede *with* lordez ;
 And the renkez *over* rane alle that regnede in erthe,
 2036 Encrochede alle Cristyndome be craftes of armes ;
 In everiche a viage the victorie was haldene ;
 In sette alle þe Sarazenes within sevenē wyntter,
 The parte ffro the Porte Jaffe to Paradyse zatez !
 2040 Thoghe a rewme be rebelle, we rekke it bot lyttillē !
 It es resone and righte the renke be restreynede !
 Do dresse we tharefore, and byde we no langere,
 ffore dredlesse *with-owt*tyne dowtte, the daye schallē be
 ourez !”
 2044 Whene þeise wordez was saide, the Walsche kyngē hym
 selfē
 Waswarre of this wyderwyne, þat werrayedē his knyghttez :
 Brothely in the vale *with* voyce he ascryez,—
 “Viscownte of Valewnce, envyous of dedys,
 2048 The vassalage of Viterbe to daye schallē be revengede !
 Unvenquiste for þis place voyde schallē I never !”
 Thane the vyscownte valiante, *with* a voyse noble,
 Avoyedyde the avawewarde, enverounde his horse ;

- 2052 He drissede in a derfe schelde, endenttyd *with* sable,
 With a dragone engowschede, dredfulle to schewe,
 Devorande a dolphyne with dolefulle lates,
 In seyne that oure soveraygne sulde be distroyede,
- 2056 And alle done of dawez with dynttez of swreddez;
 ffor thare es noghte bot dede thare the dragone es raissede!
 Thane the comlyche kynge castez in fewtyre,
 With a crewelle launce cowpez fullø evene
- 2060 Abowne *þe* spayre a spanne, emange *þe* schortte rybbys,
 That the splent and the spleene on the spere lengez!
 The blode sprete owtte and sprede as *þe* horse spryngez,
 And he sproulez fullø spakely, bot spekes he no more!
- 2064 And thus has *syr* Valyant haldene his avowez,
 And venqwyste *þe* viscownte, thate victor was haldene!
 Thane *syr* Ewayne *syr* Fytz Uriene fullø enkerlye rydez
 Onone to the emperour his egle to towche;
- 2068 Thrughe his brode bataile he buskes be-lyfe,
 Braydez owt his brande *with* a blyth chere,
 Roverssede it redelye, and awaye rydys;
 fferkez in *with* the fewle in his faire handez,
- 2072 And ffittez in freely one ffrounte *with* his feris.
 Now buskez *syr* Lancelot, and braydez fullø evene
 To *syr* Lucius the lorde, and lothelye hyme hyttez;
 Thurghe pawnce *and* platez he percede the maylez,
- 2076 That the prowde penselle in his pawanche lengez!
 The hede haylede owtt be-hynde ane halfe fote large,
 Thurghe hawberke and hanche, *with* *þe* harde wapyne!
 The stede and the steryne mane strykes to *þe* grownde,
- 2080 Strake downe a standerde, and to his stale wendez!
 "Me lykez wele," sais *syr* Loth, "þone lordez are dely-
 verede!
- The lott lengez nowe on me, *with* leve of my lorde:
 To day salle my name be laide, and my life aftyre,
- 2084 Bot some leppe fro the lyfe, that one þone lawnde hovez!"
 Thane strekez the steryne, and streynys his brydylle,
 Strykez in-to the stowre on a stede ryche,

His device is a
 dragon devour-
 ing a dolphin.

Sir Valiant lays
 his lance in rest,
 and pierces him
 through the short
 ribs.

And thus did he
 redeem his word.

Sir Ewain makes
 a bold attempt to
 reach the Em-
 peror.

Sir Lancelot slays
 the Lord Lucius.

Sir Lott rejoices
 that his turn is
 now come.

He slays a giant,

Enjoynede with a geaunt, and jaggede hym thorowe !
 2088 Jolyly this gentille for-justede anoþer,
 Wroghte wayes fullæ wyde, werrayande knyghtez,
 And wondes alle wathely, that in þe waye stondez !
 ffyghttez with alle the ffrappe a furlange of waye,
 2092 ffelled fele appone felde with his faire wapene,
 Venqwiste and has the victorie of valyaunt knyghtez,
 And alle enverounde the vale, and voyde whene hym
 likede !

The British bow-
 men discharge
 their arrows.

2096 **T**hane bowmene of Bretayne brothely ther-aftyre
 Bekerde with bregaundez of ferre in tha laundez,
 With flonez fleterede þay flitt fullæ frescly þer frekez,
 fliche with fetheris thurghe þe fyne maylez :
 Sithe flyttynge es foule that so the flesche derys,
 2100 That flowe o ferrome in flawnkkes of stedez ;

The Dutchmen
 throw darts.

Dartes the Duche-mene daltene aȝaynes,
 With derfe dynttez of dede, dagges thurghe schelde ;
 Qwarelles qwayntly swappez thorowe knyghtez
 2104 With iryne so wekyrly, that wynche they never.

Many are slain
 by the sharp
 arrows.

So they schérenkene fore schotte of þe scharppe arowes,
 That all the scheltrone schonte, and schoderide at ones !
 Thane riche stedes rependez, and rasches one armes ;

2108 The hale howndrethe one hye appone heyghe lygges,
 Bot ȝitte þe hathelieste on hy, haythene and oþer ;

But the giants
 make a terrible
 charge,

All hoursches over hede harmes to wyrke.
 And alle theis geauntez be-fore, engenderide with fendez,

2112 Joynez on sir Jenitalle, and gentille knyghtez,
 With clubbez of clene stele clenkkede in helmes,
 Graschede doune crestez, and craschede braynez ;
 Kyllede couzers and coverde stedes,

and with their
 ironclubs destroy
 many cavaliers
 on white steeds.

2116 Choppode thurghe chevalers one chalke-whytte stede.
 Was never stele ne stede myghte stande them aȝaynez,
 Bot stonays and strykez doune, that in þe stale hovys.
 Tille þe conquerour come with his kene knyghttez,

Nothing can
 stand against
 them until Ar-
 thur comes.

2120 With crowelle contenaunce he cryede fullæ lowde,—
 “I wende no Bretouns walde bee basschede for so lyttill,

He despises
 them,

And fore bare-legyde boyes, þat one the bente hovys!"

- 2124 **H**e clekys owtte Collbrande fullē clenlyche burneschte, and plucking out Colbrand, quickly cuts the giant Golapas in two at the knees;
 Graythes hyme to Golapas, þat grevyde moste;
 Kuttes hyme evenē by þe knees clenly in sondyre.

"Come downe," *quod* the kyng, "and karpe to thy ferys!

Thowe arte to hye by þe halfe, I hete þe in trouthe!

- 2128 Thowe salle be handsomere hye, with þe helpe of my telling him "he was too high by half." Then he strikes off his head.
 Lorde!"

With þat stelenē brande he strake ofe his hede.

Sterynly in þat stoure he strykes anoþer.

Thus he settez on sevenē with his sekyre knyghttez:

- 2132 Whylles sixty ware servede soo, ne sessede they never! He and his knights slay sixty giants.

And thus at the joyenyge the geauntez are dystroyede,

And at þat journey for-justede with gentille lordez.

Than the Romaines, and the renkkes of þe rounde table,

- 2136 Rewles them in arraye, rerewarde ande oþer, The Romans rally and make a fierce resistance.

With wyghte wapynez of werre, thay wroghtenē one
 helmes,

Rittez with rennke stele fullē ryalle maylez;

Bot they fut themē fayre, thes frekk byernez,

- 2140 ffewters in freely one fferaunte stedes,

ffoynes fullē felly with flyschande speris,

ffretenē of orfrayes feste appone scheldez.

So fele fay es in fyghte appone þe felde levyde,

- 2144 That iche a furthe in the firthe of rede blode rynnys! Many men are slain. Rivers of blood run into the sea.

By that swyftely one swarthe þe swett es bylevede,

Swerdez swangene in two, sweltand knyghtez

Lyes wyde opyne welterande one walopande stede;

- 2148 Wondes of wale menē werkande sydys,

ffacez fetteled unfaire in filterede lakes,

Alle craysed for-trodyne with trappede stede;

The faireste figured folde that figurede was ever,

- 2152 Alles ferre alles a furlange, a thosande at ones!

Be than the Romainez ware rebuykyde a lyttille,

With-drawes theymē drerely, and dreches no lengare;

Oure prynce with his powere persewes theymē aftyre,

The Romans begin to retreat, and Arthur presses on them.

- 2156 Prekez one þe proudeste with his price knyghttez.
 Sir Kayous, sir Clegis, with clene mene of armez,
 Encontres theme at þe clyffe with clene mene of armez;
 ffyghttes faste in þe fyrth, frythes no wapene,
 2160 ffelled at þe firste come fyfe hundrethe at ones!
 And when they fandē theym foresett with oure fers
 knyghtez,
 ffewe mene agayne fele, mot fychē theme bettyre;
 ffeghttez with alle þe frappe, foyne with speres,
 2164 And faughte with the frekkeste þat to Fraunce langez.
 Bot sir Kayous þe kene castis in fewtyre,
 Chasez one a coursere, and to a kynge rydys;
 With a launce of Lettowe he thirleth his sydez,
 2168 That the lyver and þe lunggez on þe launce lengez.
 The schafte scodyrde and schott in the schire byerne,
 And soughte thorowowte þe schelde, and in þe schalke
 rystez.
 Bot Kayous at the income was kepyd un-fayre
 but is sorely wounded by a coward knight from behind. 2172 With a cowarde knyghte of þe kythe ryche;
 At the turnynge that tyme the traytours hym hitte
 In thorowe the felettes, and in þe flawnke aftyre,
 That the boustous launce þe bewelles attamede,
 2176 þat braste at þe brawlyng, and brake in þe myddys.
 Sir Kayous knewe wele, be þat kyde wounde,
 That he was dede of þe dynte, and done owte of lyfe.
 Than he raykes one arraye and one rawe rydez,
 He feels that he has received a mortal wound, but strikes down the coward. 2180 One this ryalle his dede to revenge;
 "Kepe the, cowarde," and calles hym sone,
 Cleves hym wyth his clere brande clenliche in sondire!
 "Hadde thou wele delte thy dynt with thi handes,
 2184 I hade forgeffene þe my dede, be Crist now of hewyne!"
 He weyndes to þe wyese kynge, and wynly hym gretes,
 "I am wathely woundide, waresche mone I never!
 Wirke nowē thi wirchipe, as þe worlde askes,
 He makes his way to Arthur, and tells him that he is dying. 2188 And brynge me to beryelle, byd I no more!
 Grete wele my ladye þe qwene, ife þe werlde happyne,
 He bids him greet for him the

- And alle þe burliche birdes þat to hir boure lengez ;
 And my worthily weife, þat wrethide me never,
 2192 Bid hire fore hir wyrchipe wirke for my saulle !”
 The kynggez confessour come, with Criste in his handes,
 ffor to comforth the knyghte, kende hym þe wordes ;
 The knyghte coueride on his knees with a kaunt herte,
 2196 And caughte his Creatoure þat comfurthes us alle !
 Thane remmes þe riche kyng fore rewthe at his herte,
 Rydes in-to rowte his dede to revenge ;
 Presede in-to þe plumpe, and with a prynce metes,
 2200 That was ayere of Egipt in thos este marches ;
 Cleves hym with Collbrande clenlyche in sondyre !
 He broches evene thorowe þe byerne, and þe sadille
 bristes,
 And at þe bake of þe blonke þe bewelles entamede !
 2204 Manly in his malycoly he metes anoper,
 The medille of þat myghtty, þat hym myche grevede ;
 He merkes thurghe the maylez the myddes in sondyre,
 That the myddys of þe mane on þe mounte fallez,
 2208 þe toper halfe of þe haunche on þe horse levyde.
 Of þat hurte, alls I hope, heles he never !
 He schotte thorowe þe schiltrouns with his scharpe wapene,
 Schalkez he schrede thurghe, and schrenkede maylez ;
 2212 Baneres he bare downne, bryttenede scheldes,
 Brothely with browne stele his brethe he þare wrekes :
 Wrothely he wryththis by wyghtnesse of strenghe,
 Woundes þese whydyrewyns, werrayede knyghttes,
 2216 Threppede thorowe þe thykkys thryttene sythis,
 Thrynggez throly in the thrange, and chis evene aftyre !
 Than sir Gawayne the gude, with wyrchipfulle knyghttez,
 Wendez in the avawewarde be tha wodde hemmys ;
 2220 Was warre of syr Lucius, one launde there he hovys,
 With lordez and ligge mene, that to hyme-selfe lengede.
 Thane the emperour enkerly askes hym sonne,
 “ What wille thou, Gawayne, wyrke with thi wapyne ?
 2224 I watte be thi waveryng, thou willnez aftyre sorowe ;

Queen, the nobles
of the court, and
his wife.

Then comes the
King's confessor
with the holy
wafer.

Cayous receives
him with devo-
tion.
Then Arthur, full
of grief, rushes
into the fray to
avenge him.

He cleaves an
Egyptian prince
asunder.

Another he chops
in half.

He cuts his way
through the
battle.

Sir Gawaine at-
tacks the Em-
peror Lucius.

I sall be wrokyne on thi wrethe, for alle thi grete
wordes ?”

But Lucius with
his long sword
wounds Sir
Lionel,

He laughte owtte a lange swerde, and luyschede one ffaste,
And *sy*r Lyonelle in the launde lordely hym strykes,

2228 Hittes hym on þe hede, þat þe helme bristis ;

Hurttes his herne-pane an haunde-brede large !

Thus he layes one þe lumppe, and lordlye þem̃ served,
Wondide worthily wirchipfullē knyghttez !

and makes the
blood flow from
Sir Florent.

2232 ffighettez with Florent that beste es of swerdez,

Tille þe fomande blode tille his fyste rynnes !

Thane þe Romayns relevyde, þat are ware rebuykkyde,
And alle to-rattys oure meñ with theire riſte horsses ;

The Romans, ex-
cited by his
bravery, get the
better of Arthur's
men.

2236 fflore they see þaire cheftayne be chauffede so sore,

They chasse and choppe doune oure chevalrous knyghttes !

Sir Bedwere was borne thurghe, and his breste thyrllede,

Sir Bedwere is
slain.

With a burlyche braunde, brode at þe hiltis ;

2240 The ryalle raunke stele to his hertte rynnys,

And he rusches to þe erthe, rewthe es the more !

Then Arthur
comes to the
rescue.

Thane þe conquerour tuke kepe, and come with his
strengthes

To reschewe þe ryche mene of þe rounde table,

2244 To owtraye þe emperour, ȝif auntire it schewe,

Ewyne to þe egle, and Arthure askryes.

The emperour thane egerly at Arthure he strykez,

Awkwarde on þe umbrere, and egerly hym hittez !

The Emperor
strikes Arthur on
the visor, and
wounds his face.

2248 The nakyde swerde at þe nese noyes hym sare,

The blode of bolde kyng̃e over þe breste rynnys,

Beblede at þe brode schelde and þe bryghte mayles !

Oure bolde kyng̃e bowes þe blonke be þe bryghte brydylle,

Arthur gives him
a buffet that cuts
through his head
and breast.

2252 With his burlyche brande a buffette hym reches,

Thourghe þe brene and þe breste with his bryghte wapyne,

O-slante doune fro þe slote he slyttes at ones !

Sir Lucius dies,
and the Romans
fly.

Thus endys þe emperour of Arthure hondes,

2256 And all his austeryne oste þare-of ware affrayede !

Now they ferke to þe fyrthe, a fewe þat are levede,

ffor ferdnesse of oure folke, by þe fresche strandez !

- The floure of oure ferse mene one fferant stede
 2260 ffolowes frekly on þe frekes, thate ffrayed was never. Arthur's men pursue.
 Thane þe kyde conquerour cryes fulle lowde,—
 “Cosyne of Cornewaile, take kepe to þi-selfene,
 That no captayne be kepyde for none silver,
 2264 Or *syr Kayous* dede be cruelly vengede!”
 “Nay,” sais *syr Cador*, “so me Criste helpe!
 Thare ne es kaysere ne kyng, þat undire Criste rygnes,
 þat I ne schalle kille colde dede be crafte of my handez!”
 2268 Tharemyghte mene see chiftaynes, on chalke whittestedez,
 Choppe doun in the chaas chevalrye noble;
 Romaynes þe rycheeste and ryalle kynges,
 Braste with ranke stele theire rybbys in sondyre!
The King bids them give no quarter.
 2272 Grayves fore-brustene thurghe burneste helmes,
 With brandez for-brittenede one brede in þe laundez;
 They hewed doun haythene mene with hiltede swerde,
 Be hole hundrethez on hye; by þe holte eynyes!
Sir Cador declares that he will spare neither king nor kaiser.
 2276 Thare myghte no silver theym save, ne socoure theire
 lyves,
 Sowdane ne Sarazene,—ne senatour of Rome!
 Thane relevis þe renkes of the rounde table
 Be þe riche revare, that rynnys so faire;
 2280 Lugegez thaym luffye by þa lyghte strandez,
 Alle on lawe in þe lawnde, that lordlyche byernes:
 Thay kaire to þe karyage, and tuke whate them likes,
 Kamelles and sekadrisses, and cofirs fulle riche,
 2284 Hekes and hakkenays, and horses of armes,
 Howsynge and herbergage of heythene kynges;
 They drewe owt of dromondaries dyverse lordes,
 Moyllez mylke whitte, and mervailous bestez,
 2288 Elfaydes, and Arrabys, and olyfauntez noble,
 þer are of þe Oryent, with honourable kynges.
A fearful carnage follows.
Heathen men are slain by hundreds.
Arthur's men plunder the rich camp of the Romans.
Horses, camels, dromedaries, milk-white mules, elephants, and many marvellous beasts are captured.
Bot *syr Arthure* onone ayeres þer-aftyre
 Ewyne to the Emperour, with honourable kyngis;
 2292 Laughte hym upe fulle lovelyly with lordliche knyghttez,
 And ledde hym to þe layere, thare the kyng lygges.

The bodies of the
Emperor and
chief men of
Rome are em-
balmed and
wrapped in lead,

Thane harawdez heghely, at heste of the lordes,
Hunttes upe the haythemene, that on heghte lygges,
2296 The Sowdane of Surry, and certayne kynges,
Sexty of þe cheefe senatours of Rome.
Thane they bussches and bawmede þaire honourliche
kynges,

enclosed in
chests, and sent
to Rome with
their banners
displayed over
them.

Sewed theme in sendelle sexti faulde aftire,
2300 Lappede them in lede, lesse that they schulde
Chawnge or chawffe, ȝif þay myghte escheffe;
Closed in kystys clene un-to Rome,
With theire baners abowne, theire bagis there-undyre,
2304 In whate countre þay kaire that knyghttes myghte knawe
Iche kyng be his colours, in kyth whare lengede.
Onone one the secounde daye, sone by þe morne,
Twa senatours ther come, and certayne knyghttez,

Two Senators
come barefoot
and kneel before
the conqueror.

2308 Hodles fro þe hethe, over þe holte eynes,
Barefote over þe bente, with brondes so ryche,
Bowes to þe bolde kyng, and biddis hym þe hiltes,
Whethire he wille hang theym or hedde, or halde theyme
on lyfe :

2312 Knelyde be-fore þe conquerour in kyrtilles allone ;
With carefulle contenance þay karpide þese wordes,—
“Twa senatours we are, thi subgettez of Rome,
That has savede oure lyfe by þeise salte strandys ;

2316 Hyd us in þe heghe wode, thurghe þe helpynge of Criste !
Besekes the of socoure, as soveraygne and lorde !
Grante us lyffe and lyme with liberalle herte,
ffor his luffe that the lente this lordchipe in erthe !”

The King grants
them their lives
on condition of
their carrying a
message for him
to Rome.

2320 “I graunte,” *quod* gude kyng, “thurghe grace of my-
selfene,
I giffe þowe lyffe and lyme, and leve for to passe,
So ȝe doo my message menskefully at Rome,
That ilke charge þat I þow ȝiffe here be-fore my cheefe
knyghttez.”

2324 “ȝis,” sais the senatours, “that salle we ensure,
Sekerly be oure trowhes thi sayenges to fullfille ;

- We salle lett for no lede þat lyffes in erthe,
 ffore pape ne for potestate, ne prynce so noble,
 2328 That ne salle lelely in lande thi letteres pronounce,
 ffor duke ne fore dussepere, to dye in þe payne!"

Thane the banerettez of Bretayne broghte þeme to tentes;

- 2332 With warme watire i-wys they wette theme fulle sone;
 They schovene this schalkes scharpely ther-aftyre,
 To rekkene theis Romaynes recreaunt and ʒoldene;
 ffor-thy schove they theme to schewe, for skomitte of
 Rome.

The British lords
bring barbers and
basons and baths
for them, in order
to prove their
submission.

- 2336 They coupylde þe kystys on kamelles be-lyve,
 On asses and arrabyes, theis honourable kynges;
 The emperoure for honoure, alle by hym one,
 Evene appone ane olyfaunte, hys egle owtt overe;

They fastened the
coffins two and
two on camels.

- 2340 Be-kende theme the captyfis the kyng dide hym-selfene,
 And alle byfore his kene mene karpede thees wordes,—

"Here are the kystis," *quod* the kyng, "kaire over
 þe mownttez;

The Emperor's
body, for honour,
was by itself on
an elephant.

- Mette fulle monee þat ʒe have mekyll ʒernede,
 2344 The taxe and þe trebutte of tene schore wyntteres,
 That was tenefully tynte in tyme of oure elders:
 Saye to the senatoure, þe ceté þat ʒemes,
 That I sende hyme þe somme, assaye how hyme likes!

Arthur charges
them to say
that they have
brought the ar-
rears of tribute
due from him to
Rome.

- 2348 Bott byde theme nevere be so bolde, whylles my blode
 regnes,

This is the only
tribute they will
ever get from
him.

Efte for to brawlee þeme for my brode landez,
 Ne to aske trybut ne taxe be nakyne tyle,
 Bot syche tresoure as this, whilles my tyme lastez."

- 2352 Nowe they raike to Rome the redyeste wayes,
 Knylles in the capatoylle, and comowns assemblies,
 Soverayngez and senatours, the ceté þat ʒemes;
 Be-kende theme the caryage, kystis and oþer,

They hasten to
Rome and sum-
mon the people
to the Capitol.

- 2356 Alls þe conquerour comaunde with cruelle wordes.
 "We hafe trystily trayvellede þis tributte to feche,
 The taxe and þe trewage of fowre score wynteris,

Perform Arthur's
message as he
directed.

They have
brought the tax
dues from Eng-
land and Ireland,
and all the west.

- Of Iglande, of Irelande and alle þir owtt illes,
2360 That Arthure in the occedente occupyes att ones :
He byddis þow nevere be so bolde, whills his blode regnes
To brawle þowe fore Bretayne ne his brode landes,
Ne aske hyme tribute ne taxe be nonkyns title,
2364 Bot syche tresoure as this, whills his tyme lastis.

They declare that
they have suffer-
ed defeat and
great loss,

- We haffe foughttene in ffrance, and us es foule happenede,
And alle oure myche faire folke faye are by-levede !
Eschappide there ne chevallrye, ne cheftaynes noþer,
2368 Bott choppede downne in the chasse, syche chawnce es
be-fallene !

and bid the Ro-
mans beware.

We rede þe store þowe of stone, and stuffene þour walles :
þow wakkens wandrethe and werre ; be-ware, þif þow
lykes !”

This great battle
between Arthur
and the Romans
was fought in the
calends of May.

- In the kalendez of Maye this caas es be-fallene :
2372 The roy ryalle renownde, with his rownde table,
One the coste of Constantyne by þe clere strandez,
Has þe Romaynes ryche rebuykede for ever !
Whene he hade foughttene in Fraunce, and the felde
wonnene,

It was a blow
from which the
Romans could
not recover.

- 2376 And fersely his foomene fellde owtte of lyfe,
He bydes for þe beryenge of his bolde knyghtez,
That in batelle with brandez ware broughte owte of lyfe.
He beryes at Bayone *syr* Bedwere þe ryche ;
2380 The cors of Kayone þe kene at Came es belevefede,
Koveride with a crystalle clenly alle over ;
His fadyre conqueride þat kyth knyghtly with hondes :

After the defeat
Arthur buries his
knights.

Sir Bedwere at
Bayonne ;
Sir Cayous at
Camelot ;

In Burgundy,
Berade, and
Baldwin, and
Bedwar ;

Sir Cador at
Camelot.
In the August
after Arthur en-
ters into Ger-
many,

- 2384 Sir Berade and Bawdwyne, sir Bedwar þe ryche,
And *syr* Cador at Came, as his kynde askes.
Thane *syr* Arthure onone, in þe Auguste *þer*-aftyre,
Enteres to Almayne wyth osten arrayed ;

- 2388 Lengez at Lusscheburghe, to lechen^e hys knyghttez,
 With his lele ligge-mene, as lorde in his awene:
 And one *Chrispofre* daye a concelle he haldez,
 Withe kynges and kaysers, clerkkes and o^{per},
- 2392 Comandez them kenely to caste alle peire wittys,
 How he may *conquere* by crafte the kythe þat he claymes.
 Bot the *conquerour* kene, curtais and noble,
 Karpes in the concelle theys knyghtly wordez,—
- 2396 “Here es a knyghte in theis klevys, enclesside with hilles,
 That I have cowaite to knawe, be-cause of his wordez,
 That es Lorayne þe lele, I kepe noghte to layne;
 The lordchipe es lovely, as ledes me telles :
- 2400 I wille that Ducherye devyse, and dele as me lykes,
 And seyne dresse wyth þe duke, if destynny suffre:
 The renke rebelle has bene un-to my rownde table,
 Redy aye with Romaynes, and ryotte my landes!
- 2404 We salle rekkene fulle rathe, if resone so happene,
 Who has ryghte to þat rente, by ryche Gode of hevene!
 Thane wille I by Lumbardye lykande to schawe,
 Sett lawe in þe lande, þat laste salle ever.
- 2408 The tyrauntez of *Ter kayne* tempeste a littyll,
 Talke with þe temperalle, whilles my tyme lastez;
 I gyffe my protteccione to alle þe pope landez,
 My ryche penselle of pes my pople to schewe:
- 2412 It es a foly to offende oure fadyr undire Gode,
 Ow^{per} Peter or Paule, þa postles of Rome.
 ȝiff we spare the *spirituelle*, we spede bot the bettire;
 Whilles we have for to speke, spille salle it never!”¹
- 2416 **N**ow they spede at þe spurres, *with-owt*tyne speche
 more,
 To þe Marche of Meyes, theis manliche knyghtez,
 That es Lorrayne alofede, as Londone es here;
 Pety of þat seyn^{ow}re, that soveraynge es holdene.
- 2420 The kyng ferkes furthe on a faire stede,

and encamps at
Luxemburg.

He holds a coun-
cil on Christmas-
day to devise how
he may conquer
all the territory
that he claims.

He makes a
speech in the
council, saying
that he much de-
sires the posses-
sions of the Duke
of Lorraine,

who has been
long a rank rebel
to his Round
Table.

He will soon
show him who
is the rightful
owner of those
lands!

Afterwards he
will go to Lom-
bardy and then
visit the tyrants
of Turkey,

but he will give
protection to all
the lands of the
Pope, for it is
folly to offend
our Father under
God.

If we spare the
goods of the
spirituality we
shall speed the
better.

Arthur straight-
way leads his
knights to lay
siege to Metz.

¹ This passage may be taken as tolerably conclusive evidence that the poem was com-
posed by an ecclesiastic.

They seek a place
to fix the en-
gines.

The citizens
shoot at them
with arrows and
bolts.

The king, with-
out his shield,
remains close to
the walls within
range of the
arrows.

Sir Ferrere re-
monstrates with
him for exposing
himself to such
danger.

Arthur scorns
him, and tells
him

that he would be
afraid of a fly
that lighted on
him.

As for him, he
fears not such
poor creatures as
these.

Never knave will
be allowed to kill
a crowned king.

Then come the
gallant troops of
Arthur.

First the light
forayers on nim-
ble steeds;

then the renown-
ed champions of
the Round Table;

- With ferreraunde ferawnte, and oþer foure knyghtez;
Abowte the cete þa sevene, thay soughte at þe nextte,
To seke them a sekyre place to sett withe engeynes;
2424 Thane they beneyde in burghe bowes of vyse,
Bekyrs at þe bolde kynge with boustouse lates,
All-blawsters at Arthure egerly schottes,
ffor to hurte hym or his horse with þat hard wapene:
2428 The kynge schonte for no schotte, ne no schelde askys,
Bot schewes hym scharpely in his schene wedys;
Lenges alle at laysere, and lokes one the wallys,
Whare þey ware laweste the ledes to assaille.
2432 "Sir," said *syr* fferere, "a ffoly thowe wirkkes,
Thus nakede in thy noblaye to neghe to þe walles,
Sengely in thy surcotte, this ceté to reche,
And schewe þe with-in, there to schende us alle.
2436 Hye us hastylve heynne, or we mone fulle happene,
ffor hitt they the or thy horse, it harmes for ever!"
"Ife thowe be ferde," *quod* the kyng, "I rede thow
ryde uttere,
Lesse þat þey rywe the with their rownd wapyne!
2440 Thow arte bot a fawntyne, ne ferly me thynkkys!
þou wille be flayede for a flye þat one thy flesche lyghttes!
I ame nothyng agaste, so me Gode helpe!
þof siche gadlynges be grevede, it greves me bot lyttill!
2444 Thay wyne no wirchiþe of me, bot wastys their takle!
They salle wante or I weende, I wagene myne hevede!
Salle never harlotte have happe, thorowe helpe of my
Lorde,
To kyll a crownde kynge with krysme enoyntede!"
2448 Thane come þe herbarjours, harageous knyghtez,
The hale batelles one hye harrawnte ther-aftyre;
And oure forreours ferse, appone fele halfes,
Come flyeande be-fore one ferawnt stedes;
2452 fferkande in arraye their ryalle knyghttez,
The renkez renownde of þe rownnd table:
Alle þe frekke mene of Fraunce folowede thare aftyre,

- ffaire fittyde one frownte, and one the felde hovys.
- 2456 Thane the schalkes scharpelye scheftys theire horsez,
To schewene them semly in theire scheene wedes;
Buskes in batayle with baners displayede,
With brode scheldes enbrassede, and burlyche helmys,
- 2460 With pennons and penselles of ylke prynce armes,
Appayrelde with perrye and pretious stones:
The lawnces with loraynes, and lemande scheldes,
Lyghtenande as þe levenynge, and lemand al over.
- 2464 **T**hane the price mene prekes, and proves þeire horsez,
Satilles to þe ceté, appone sere halves;
Enserches the subbarbes sadly thare-aftyre,
Discoveris of schotte-mene, and skyrmys a lyttill;
- 2468 Skayres þaire skottefers, and theire skowtte waches,
Brittenes theire barrers with theire bryghte wapyns;
Bett downe a barbycane, and þe brygge wynnys,
Ne hade the garnyson bene gude at þe grete zates,
- 2472 Thay hade wonne that wone be theire awene strenghe!
Thane with-drawes oure mene, and drisses them bettyre,
ffor dred of þe drawe-brigge dasschede in sondre;
Hyes to þe harbergage, thare the kyng hovy
- 2476 With his battelle one heghe, horsyde on stedy;
Thane was þe prynce purvayede, and þeire places nomene,
Pyghte pavyllions of palle, and plattes in seegge.
Thane lenge they lordly, as þeme leefte thoghte,
- 2480 Waches in ylke warde, as to þe werre falles,
Settes up sodaynly certayne engynes;
One Sonondaye be þe soone has a fleche zoldene.
The kyng calles one Florente, þat flour was of
knyghttez,—
- 2484 “The Fraunche-mene enfeblesches, ne farly me thynkkys!
They are un-fondyde folke in þa faire marches,
ffor them wantes þe flesche and fude that them lykes.
Here are fforestез faire appone fele halves,
- 2488 And thedyre feemene are flede with freliche bestes!
Thow salle foonde to þe felle, and forraye the mountes;

and all the brave men of France following them. They cause their steeds to curvet to show their bright caparisons. Their banners are displayed; broad shields of brass and mighty helmets; pennons emblazoned with arms. The lances glance like lightning.

The chief men exhibit the speed of their horses.

They encompass the city on divers sides,

skirmish with the garrison, and break down their defences.

But the garrison at the great gates checks them.

Arthur's men withdraw to where the king was waiting.

They pitch their tents, and prepare for a regular siege.

Arthur calls for Sir Florent, and sends him on an expedition into the neighbouring country to collect supplies.

- Sir fforawnt and *syr* Florydas *salle* folowe thi brydylle ;
 Us moste with some fresche mette refresche our pople,
 2492 That are feedde in þe fyrthe with þe froyte of þe erthe.
 Thare *salle* weende to þis viage sir Gawayne hym-selfene,
 Wardayne fulle wyrchipfulle, and so hym wele semes :
 Sir Wecharde, *syr* Waltyre, theis wyrchipfulle knyghtes,
 and many other 2496 With alle wyseste mene of þe Weste marches :
 Sir Clegis, *syr* Clarybalde, *syr* Clarymownde þe noble,
 The capytayne oo wardyfe clenlyche arrayede.
 Goo now, warne alle þe wache, Gawayne and oþer,
 2500 And weendes furthe on þour waye withowttynē moo
 wordes."
- Now ferkes to þe fyrthe thees fresche mene of armes,
 To þe felle so fewe, theis fresclyche byernes,
 Thorowe hopes and hymlande hillys and oþer,
 2504 Holtis and hare woddes with heslyne schawes,
 Thorowe marasse and mosse and montes so heghe ;
 And in the myste mornynge one a mede falles,
 Mawens and un-made, maynoyrede bott lyttylle,
 They fall upon a 2508 In swathes sweppene downe fulle of swete floures :
 Thare unbrydilles theis bolde, and baytes þeire horses,
 To þe grygyng of þe daye, that byrdes gane synge ;
 whyle the birds 2512 That solaces alle synfulle, þat syghte has in erthe.
 Thane weendes owtt the wardayne, *syr* Gawayne hym-
 selfene,
 Alles he þat weysse was and wyghte, wondyrs to seke ;
 Thane was he warre of a wye wondyre wele armyde,
 2516 Baytand one a wattire banke by þe wodde eynis,
 Buskede in brenyes bryghte to be-halde,
 Enbrassed a brode schelde on a blonke ryche,
 With birenne ony borne, bot a boye one
 He sees a knight 2520 Hoves by hym on a blonke, and his spere holdes ;
 He bare sessenande in golde thre grayhondes of sable,
 With chapes a cheynes of chalke whytte sylver,
 A charboele in þe cheefe, chawngawnde of hewes,
- Sir Gawaine him-
 self, the wor-
 shipful warden,
 shall accompany
 them,
 and many other
 knights of name.
 These fresh men
 of arms start in
 their journey
 through woods
 and over hills.
 They fall upon a
 field of grass
 newly mown,
 where they bait
 their horses,
 while the birds
 sweetly sing.
 Sir Gawaine goes
 forth by himself
 to seek adven-
 tures.
 He sees a knight
 well armed,
 and a page carry-
 ing his spear.
 On his shield his
 coat of arms was
 displayed.

2524 And a cheefe anterous, chalange who lykes.

Sir Gawayne glystes on the gome *with* a glade wille!

A grete spere fro his grome he grypes in hondes,
Gyrdes ewene overe the streme one a stede ryche

Sir Gawaine beholds him with great joy, and goes across the stream towards him.

2528 To þat steryne in stour, one strenghe þare he hovys!

Egerly one Inglisce Arthure he askryes,

The toþer irouslye ansuers hyme sone

On a launde of Lorryayne with a lowde stevene,

He shouts his cry, "Arthur of England."

The other shouts "Lorraine."

2532 That ledes myghte lystene þe lenghe of a myle!

"Whedyr prykkes thow, pilour, þat profers so large?

Here pykes thowe no praye, profire whene þe lykes!

Bot thow in þis perelle put of the bettire,

Then does the strange knight declare that Gawayne shall be his prisoner.

2536 Thow salle be my presonere, for alle thy prowde lates!"

"Sir," sais *syr* Gawayne, "so me Gode helpe!

Siche glaverande gomes greves me bot lyttill!

Bot if thowe graythe thy gere, the wille grefe happene,

Sir Gawaine treats his great words with contempt.

2540 Or thowe goo of þis greve, for alle thy grete wordes!"

Thane þeire launces they lachene, thes lordlyche byernez,

Laggene *with* longe speres one lyarde stedes;

Cowpene at awntere be brastes of armes,

Then they lay their spears in rest, and meet.

2544 Tille bothe þe crowelle speres broustene att ones!

Thorowe scheldys þey schotte, and scherde thorowe males,

Bothe schere thorowe schoulders a schaftmonde large!

Thus worthylye þes wyes wondede ere bothene;

Both the spears strike fair, and wound the knights.

2548 Or they wreke þeme of wrethe a-waye wille þey never!

Than they raughte in the reyne and a-gayne rydes,

Redely theis rathe mene rusches owtte swordez,

Hittes one hellmes fullle hertelyche dynttys,

Then they rein in their horses and return to the fight with swords.

2552 Hewes appone hawberkes with fullle harde wapyns!

ffulle stowttly þey stryke thire steryne knyghttes,

Stokes at þe stomake with stelyne poynttes,

ffeghttene and floresche withe flawmande swerdez,

Fearful blows are exchanged.

2556 Tille þe flawes of fyre flawmes one theire helmes.

Thane *syr* Gawayne was grevede, and grythgide fullle sore;

With Galuthe his gude swerde grymlye he strykes!

Clefe þe knyghttes schelde clenliche in sondre!

Sir Gawaine waxes wroth, and strikes grimly with his sword Galuth.

He cleaves the knight's shield asunder, and lays open his side.

The knight strikes fiercely at Sir Gawaine.

He cuts through his armour and draws blood,

which flows over all his dress.

Then the knight jeers at him, and says the blood shall never be staunched.

Sir Gawaine despises his words,

but would know what can stop the bleeding.

The knight will tell him if Gawaine will allow him to have shrift and prepare himself for his end.

Gawaine readily grants this.

- 2560 Who lukes to þe lefte syde, whene his horse launches,
With þe lyghte of þe sonne men myghte see his lyvere!
Thane granes þe gome fore greefe of his wondys,
And gyrdis at *syr* Gawayne, as he by glentis;
- 2564 And awkewarde egerly sore he hym smyttes;
An alet enamelde he oches in sondire,
Bristes þe rerebrace with the bronde ryche,
Kerves of at þe coutere with þe clene egge,
- 2568 Anetis þe avawmbrace vrayllede with silver!
Thorowe a dowble vesture of velvett ryche,
With þe venymous swerde a vayne has he towchede!
That voydes so violently þat alle his witte changede!
- 2572 The vesere, the aventaille, his vesturis ryche,
With the valyant blode was verrede alle over!
Thane this tyrante tite turnes þe brydille,
Talkes un-tendirly, and sais, "þow arte towchede!"
- 2576 Us bus have a blode bande, or thi ble change,
ffor alle þe barbours of Bretayne salle noghte thy blode
stawnche!
ffor he þat es blemeste with þis brade brande, blyne
schalle he never."
- "ȝa," *quod syr* Gawayne, "thow greves me bot lyttille!"
- 2580 Thowe wenys to glopyne me with thy gret wordez!
Thow trowes with thy talkyng þat my harte talmes!
Thow betydes torfere or thowe hyene turne,
Bot thow telle me tytte, and tarye no lengere,
- 2584 What may staunche this blode þat thus faste rynnes."
"ȝife I say þe sothely, and sekire þe my trowthe,
No surggone in Salarne salle save þe bettyre;
With-thy þat thowe suffre me, for sake of thy Cryste,
- 2588 To schewe schortly my schrifte, and schape for myne
ende."
- "ȝis," *quod syr* Gawayne, "so me God helpe!
I gyfe þe grace and graunt, thofe þou hafe grefe servede!"
- 2592 With-thy thowe say me sothe what thowe here sekis,
Thus sengilly and sulayne alle þi-selfe one;

- And whate laye thow leues one, layne noghte þe sothe,
And whate legyaunce, and whare þow arte lorde."
- 2596 "My name es *syr* Priamus; a prince es my fadyre,
Praysede in his *pertyes* with provede kynges;
In Rome thare he regnes he es riche haldene;
He has bene rebelle to Rome, and redene their landes,
- 2600 Werreyand weisely wyntters and þeres,
Be witt and be wyssdome, and be wyghte strenghe,
And be wyrchipfulle werre his awene has he wonne.
He es of Alexandire blode, *overlynge* of kynges,
- 2604 The uncle of his ayele, *syr* Ector of Troye;
And here es the kynredene that I of come,
And Judas and Josue, þise gentille knyghtes:
I ame apparaunt his ayere, and eldeste of oþer;
- 2608 Of Alexandere and Aufrike, and alle þa owte landes,
I am in possessione, and plenerly sessede.
In alle þe price cetees that to þe porte langes,
I salle hafe trewly the tresour and the londes,
- 2612 And bothe trebute and taxe whilles my tyme lastes;
I was so hawtayne of herte, whilles I at home lengede,
I helde nane my hippe heghte undire hevene ryche;
ffor-thy was I sente hedire with seven score knyghttez,
- 2616 To asaye of this werre, be sente of my fadire;
And I am for Cyrus witrye schamely supprisede,
And be awtire of armes owtrayed for evere!
Now hafe I taulde the þe kyne that I ofe come,
- 2620 Wille thow for knyghthede kene me thy name?"
"Be Criste," *quod* *syr* Gawayne, "knyghte wys I never!
With þe kydde conquerour a knafe of his chambyre:
Has wroghte in his wardrope wyntters and þeres,
- 2624 One his longe armour that hym beste lykid;
I poyne alle his pavelyouns þat to hym-selfe pendes,
Dyghttes his dowblettez for dukes and erles,
Aketouns avenaunt for Arthure hym selfene,
- 2628 That he usede in werre alle this aughte wyntter!
He made me þomane at þole, and gafe me gret gyftes,

The stranger knight tells him that his name is Sir Priamus, son of a prince,

who rebelled against Rome, and gained a kingdom.

He is of the blood of Alexander and Hector of Troy;

related also to Judas and Joshua;

heir of Africa.

When at home he was so proud and overbearing,

that he was sent by his father to this war with a band of knights.

He desires to know Sir Gawaine's name.

Sir Gawaine answers deceitfully that he is only a knave of Arthur's chamber,

who had given him a horse and harness as a reward for service.

"If his knaves be such, what can his knights be?" exclaims Sir Priamus. Alexander and Hector will be nothing to him.

Then Sir Gawaine tells him the truth.

He is Sir Gawaine, cousin to the Conqueror, the richest knight of all the Round Table.

Then Sir Priamus says this is better to him than any earthly possessions.

In recompense, he warns Gawaine that the Duke of Lorraine with his knights is lying in the wood near.

A mighty host well armed.

- And c. pound and a horse, and harnayse full^e ryche;
 Gife I happe to my hele that hende for to serve,
 2632 I be holpene in haste, I hette the for-sothe!"
- "Giffe his knafes be syche, his knyghttez are noble!
 There es no kyng^e undire Criste may kempe with hym one!
 He wille be Alexander ayre, þat alle þe erthe lowttede,
 2636 Abillere þane ever was syr Ector of Troye."
 "Now fore the krisome þat þou kaghte that day þou
 was crystenede,
 Whethire thoue be knyghte or knaffe, knawe now þe
 sothe :
 My name es syr Gawayne, I graunt þe forsothe,
 2640 Cosyne to the conquerour, he knowes it hyme selfene;
 Kydd in his kalander a knyghte of his chambyre,
 And rollede the richeste of alle þe rounde table!
 I ame þe dussepere and duke he dubbede with his hondes,
 2644 Deynttely on a daye be-fore his dere knyghtes;
 Gruche noghte, gude syr, þofe me this grace happene;
 It es þe gifte of Gode, the gree es hys awene!"
- "Petire!" sais Priamus, "now payes me bettire
 2648 Thane I of Provynce warre prynce, and of Paresche ryche!
 ffore me ware lever prevely be prykyd to þe harte,
 Than ever any prikkere had siche a pryse wonnyne!
 Bot here es herberde at handes, in þone huge holtes,
 2652 Halle bataile one heyghe, take hede þif the lyke!
 The duke of Lorraine the derfe, with his dere knyghtes,
 The doughtyest of Dolfmede, and Duchemene many,
 The lordes of Lumbardye that leders are haldene,
 2656 The garnyson^e of Godarde gaylyche arrayede,
 The wyese of þe Westvale, wirchipfull^e biernez,
 Of Sessoyne and Surylande Sarazenes enewe;
 They are nowmerde full^e neghe, and namede in rollez
 2660 Sixty thowsande and tene for-sothe of sekyre mene of
 armez;
 Bot þif thou hye fro þis hethe, it harmes us bothe,
 And bot my hurtes be sone holpene, hole be I never!

- Tak heede to þis hausemene, þat he no horne blawe,
 2664 Are thowe heyly in haste beese hewene al to peces;
 ffor they are my retenuz to ryde whare I wylle,
 Es none redyare renkes regnande in erthe;
 Be thow raghte with þat rowtt, thow rydes no forþer,
 2668 Ne thow bees never rawnsonede for reches in erthe!"
- Sir Gawayne wente or þe wathe come, whare hym beste
 lykede,
 With this wortheliche wye, that wondyd was sore;
 Merkes to þe mountayne there oure mene lenges,
 2672 Baytaynde theire blonkes þer on þe brode mede;
 Lordes lenande lowe one lemande scheldes,
 With lowde laghttirs one lofte for lykyng of byrdez,
 Of larkez, of lynkwhyttz, þat lufflyche songene,
 2676 And some was sleghte one slepe with slaughte of þe pople,
 That sange in þe sesone in the schenne schawes,
 So lawe in þe lawndez so lykande notes.
 Thane *syr* Whycher whas warre þaire wardayne was
 wondyde,
 2680 And went to hym wepand, and wryngande his handes;
 Sir Wyhere, *syr* Walchere, theis wise mene of armes,
 Had wondyre of *syr* Gawayne, and wente hyme agayns:
 Mett hym in the mydwaye, and mervaille theme toghte
 2684 How he maisterede þat mane, so myghtty of strengthes!
 Be alle þe welthe of þe werlde, so woo was þeme never!
 "ffor alle our wirchippe i-wysse awaye es in erthe!"
 "Greve þow noghte," *quod* Gawayne, "for Godis luffe
 of hevene;
 2688 ffore this es bot goesemere, and gyffene one erles;
 þoffe my schouldire be schrede, and my schelde thyrllede,
 And the wielde of myne arme werkkes a littille,
 This prissonere *syr* Priamus, that has perilous wondes,
 2692 Sais þat he has salvez salle softene us bothene."
 Thane stirttes to his sterape sterynfull knygghtez,
 And he lordely lyghttes and laghte of his brydille,
 And lete his burlyche blonke baite on þe flores;

He bids him be-
ware lest they
should discover
and destroy him.

Sir Gawayne goes
with the wound-
ed knight to Ar-
thur's men.

They are reposing
themselves in dif-
ferent ways,

listening to the
songs of the
birds.

Sir Whycher per-
ceives that Sir
Gawayne is
wounded,

and wonders how
he could have
conquered this
mighty knight.

Sir Gawayne
makes light of
his wounds.

His prisoner, Sir
Priamus, has
salves that will
heal them.

They assist him
to dismount.

He bends from
exhaustion and
loss of blood.

2696 Braydes of his bacenette and his ryche wedis,
Bownnes to his brode schelde and bowes to þe erthe,
In alle the bodye of that bolde es no blode leved!
Than preses to syr Priamous precious knyghtes,

Sir Priamus is
lifted from his
horse.

2700 Avyssely of his horse hentis hym in armes;
His helme and his hawberke thay takenē of aftyre,
And hastily for his hurtte alle his herte chawngyd;
Thay laide hyme downe in the lawndeze, and laghte of
his wedes,

They find at his
girdle a gold box
filled with the
flower of Para-
dise.

2704 And he levede hym one lange, or how hym beste lykede;
A ffoyle of fyne golde they fandē at his gyrdille,
þat es fulle of þe flour of þe fourē welle,
þat flowes owte of Paradice whene þe flode ryse,

With this the
knights are
healed.

2708 That myche froyt of fallez, þat feede schalle us alle;
Be it frette on his flesche, þare synnes are entamede,
The freke schalle be fische halle with-in fowre howres.
They uncovere þat cors with fulle clene hondes;

Then wine and
provisions are
brought to them.

2712 With clere watire a knyghte clensis theire wondes,
Keled theyme kyndly, and comforthed þer hertes.
And whene þe carffes ware clene, þay clede them aȝayne;
Barelle ferrers they brochede, and broghte theme the wyne,
2716 Bothe brede and brawne, and bredis fullē ryche;
Whene þay hade etene anone they armede after.
Thane tha awntrende men as armes askryes,
With a claryoune clere, thire knyghtez to-gedyre,

The scouts bring
news of the army
encamped in the
wood.

2720 Callys to concelle, and of this case tellys:—
“ȝondyr es a companye of clene mene of armes,
The keneste in kontek þat undir Criste lenges;
In ȝone okene wode an oste are arrayede,

Sir Gawaine is for
attacking them,

2724 Undir takande mene of þiese owte londes;
As sais us *syr* Priamous, so helpe seynt Peter!”
“Go, mene, *quod* Gawayne, “and grape in ȝoure herteze,
Who salle graythe to ȝone greve to ȝone gret lordes;

but refers to Sir
Florent, the
leader of the
party.

2728 ȝif we gettlesse goo home, the kyng wille be grevede,
And say we are gadlynges, agaste for a lyttillē:
We are with *syr* Florente, as to-daye falles,

That es floure of ffraunce, for he fleede never ;

- 2732 He was chosene and chargegide in chambire of þe kyng,
Chiftayne of þis journee with chevalrye noble ;
Whethire he fyghte or he flee, we salle folowe aftyre,
ffore alle þe fere of þone folke forsake salle I never ! ”

- 2736 “ ffadyre,” sais *syr* Florent, “ fulle faire ȝe it telle !
Bot I ame bot a fawntkyne, unfraystede in armes ;
ȝif any foly be-falle, þe fawte salle be owrs,
And freindly o Fraunce be flemede for ever !

Sir Florent expresses his deference to Sir Gawaine, the warden of the knights of the Round Table,

- 2740 Woundes noghte ȝour wirchipe, my witte es bot symple ;
ȝe are owre wardayne i-wysse, wyrke as ȝowe lykes ;
ȝe are at the ferreste noghte passande fyve hundrethe,
And þat es fully to fewe to feghte with theme alle,

and thinks their numbers are too few to fight.

- 2744 ffore harlottez and hausemene salle helpe bott littille ;
They wille hye theyme hyene for alle þeire gret wordes !
I rede ȝe wyrke aftyre witte, as wyesse men of armes,
And warpes wylily a-waye, as wirchipfulle knyghtes.”

He is for a careful retreat.

- 2748 “ I grawnte,” *quod* *syr* Gawayne, “ so me Gode helpe !
Bot here are galyarde gomes þat of þe gre servis,
The kreuelleste knyghttes of þe kynges chambyre,
That kane carpe with the coppe knyghtly wordes ;

Sir Gawaine speaks with a sneer of those who only fight with words.

- 2752 We salle prove to daye who salle the prys wyne.”
Nowe ferriours fers un-to þe fyrthe rydez,
And foungez a faire felde, and on fotte lyghttez ;
Prekes aftyre þe pray, as pryce mene of armes.

Arthur's men advance to the wood.

- 2756 fflorent and Floridas, with fyve score knyghttez,
ffolowede in þe foreste, and on þe way fowndys,
fflyngande a faste trott, and on þe folke dryffes.
Than felewes fast to our folke wele a fyve hundreth

A band of 500 of the enemy meet them, headed by Sir Feraunt.

- 2760 Of freke mene to þe fyrthe, appone fresche horses ;
One *syr* Feraunt be-fore, apone a fayre stede,
(Was fosterde in Famacoste, the fende was his fadyre)
He flenges to *syr* Florent, and prystly he kryes,—

- 2764 “ Why flees thow, falls knyghte ? þe fende hafe þi saule ! ”
Thane *syr* fflorent was fayne, and in fewter eastys ;
One fawnelle of ffryselande to fferaunt he rydys,

He calls scornfully on Sir Florent,

- And raghte in þe reyne on þe stede ryche,
 2768 And rydes to-warde the rowte, restes he no lengere!
 ffulle butt in þe frounte he flysches hymene evene,
 And alle dysfegoures his face with his felle wapene!
 Thurghe his bryghte bacenette his brayne has he towchede,
 2772 And brustene his neke-bone, þat all his breste stoppede!
 Thane his cosyne askryede, and cryede fulle lowde,
 "Thowe has killede colde dede þe kyng of alle knyghttes!
 He has bene fraistede on felde in fyftene rewmes;
 2776 He fonde never no freke myghte foghte with hym one!
 Thow schalle dye for his dede with my derfe wapene,
 And all þe doughtty for dule þat in þone dale hoves!"
 "ffy," sais *syr* floridas, "thow fferyande wryche!"
 2780 Thow wenes for to flay us, ffloke-mowthede schrewe!"
 Bot ffloidas with a swerde, as he by glentys,
 Alle þe flesche of þe flanke he flappes in sondyre,
 That alle the filthe of þe freke and fele of þe guttes
 2784 ffoloes his fole fotte, whene he furthe rydes!
 Than rydes a renke to reschewe þat byerne,
 That was Raynalde of þe rodes, and rebelle to Criste,
 Pervertede with Paynymys þat Cristene persewes;
 2788 Presses in prowldy, as þe praye wendes,
 ffore he hade in Prewsslande myche pryce wonnene;
 ffor-thi in presence thare he profers so large!
 Bot thane a renke *syr* Richere of þe rounde table,
 2792 One a ryalle stede rydes hym aȝaynes;
 Throwe a rownnde rede schelde he ruschede hym sone,
 That the rosselde spere to his herte rynnes!
 The renye rels abowte and rusches to þe erthe,
 2796 Roris fulle ruydlye, bot rade he no more!
 Now alle þat es fere and unfaye of þes fyve hundreth
 ffalles on *syr* fflorent, a ffyve score knyghttes;
 Be-twyx a plasche and a flode, appone a flate lawnde,
 2800 Oure folke fongene theire felde, and fawghte theme
 agaynes.
 Than was lowde appone lofte Lorrayne askryede,

who with his
lance in rest
pierces him
through the face
and brain.

His cousin vows
vengeance for his
death,

but Sir Floridas
quickly disposes
of him.

Sir Raynald, the
renegade, proud-
ly presses in;

but Sir Richer,
of the Round
Table, pierces him
with a spear.

Sir Florent and
his five score
knights are sorely
pressed.

The one side
shout "Lo-

- Whene ledys with longe speris lasschene to-gedyrs,
And Arthure one oure syde, whene theyme oghte ayled.
- 2804 Than *syr* fflorent and Floridas in fewtyre þey caste,
ffruschene one alle þe ffrape, and biernes affrayede;
ffellis fyve at þe frounte thare they fyrste enteride,
And, or they ferke forthire, fele of þese opere!
- 2808 Brenyes browddene they briste, brittenede scheldes,
Bettes and beres downe the best þat þeme byddes;
Alle þat rewlyde in the rowte they rydene awaye,
So rewdly they rere theys ryalle knyghttes!
- 2812 When *syr* Priamous þat prince persayvede theire gamene,
He hade peté in herte þat he ne durst profire;
He wente to *syr* Gawayne, and sais hym þese wordes,—
“Thi price mene fore thi praye putt are alle undyre,
2816 They are with Sarazenes over-sette mo þane sevene
hundreth
Of þe Sowdanes knyghtes owt of sere londes;
Walde þow suffire me, *syr*, for sake of thi Criste,
With a soppe of thi mene suppowelle theym ones.”
- 2820 “I grouche not,” *quod* Gawayne, “þe gree es þaire awene!
They mone hafe gwerddouns fullé grett graunt of my
lorde!
Bot the freke mene of Fraunce fraiste theme selfene,
ffrekes faughte noghte þeire fille this fyftene wyntter!
- 2824 I wille noghte stire with my stale half a stede lenghe,
Bot they be stedde with more stuffe thane one þone stede
hovys.”
- Thane *syr* Gawayne was warre with-owttyne þe wode
hemmes,
Wyes of þe Westfale appone wyght horsez,
- 2828 Walopande wodely, as þe waye forthes,
With alle þe wapyns i-wys that to þe werre longez;
The erle Antele the olde the avawmwarde he buskes,
Ayerande one ayther hande heghte thosande knyghtez;
- 2832 He pelours and pavyser passode alle nombyre,
That ever any prynce lede purvayede in erthe!

raine,” the other
“Arthur.”

Sir Florent and
Sir Floridas per-
form great deeds
of valour.

Sir Priamus be-
seeches Gawaine
that he may help
Arthur's knights
against the Sara-
cens.

Sir Gawaine de-
clares that they
have only just
enough to do to
please them.

He sees the main
body of the enemy
approaching,

headed by the
Earl Antele, who
leads 8,000
knights.

Than þe duke of Lorryne dresesse thare affyre,
With dowbille of þe Duche-mene, þat doughtty ware
holdene;

2836 Paynymes of Pruyslande, prekkers fullē noble,
Come prekkande be-fore with Priamous knyghttez.

The Earl is indignant that Arthur's knights should venture to resist so great a host.

Than saide the erle Antele to Algere his broþer,—
“Me angers earnestly at Arthures knyghtez!

2840 Thus enkerly one an oste awnters þeme selfene;
They wille be owtrayedē anone, are undrone ryngē,
Thus folily one a felde to fyghte with us alle!
Bot thay be fesede in faye, ferly me thynkes!

They had better retreat while they are able.

2844 Walde they purposse take, and passe one theirē wayes,
Prike home to theirē prynce, and theirē pray leve,
They myghtelenghenē theirē lycfe, and lossenē bott littille!
It wolde lyghte my herte, so helpe me oure Lorde!”

Sir Alger, his brother, says that though they are so few they are a match for an army.

2848 “Sir,” sais *syr* Algere, “thay hafe littille usede
To be owtrayedē withe oste; me angers þe more!
The fayreste schalle be fullē feye, þat in oure floke ryddez,
Alls fewe as they bene, are they the felde leve!”

Sir Gawaine rejoices at having some work to do, and encourages his knights.

2852 **T**hane gud Gawayne, gracious and noble,
Alle with glorious gle he gladdis his knyghtes;
“Gloppyns noghte, gud mene, for gleterand scheldes,
ʒofe ʒone gadlyngez be gaye one ʒone gret horses!

2856 Banerettez of Bretayne, buskes up ʒour hertes!
Bees noghte baiste of ʒone boyes, ne of ʒaire bryghte wedis!
We salle blenke theirē boste for alle theirē bolde profire!
Als bouxome as birde es in bede to hir lorde,

2860 ʒeffe we feghte to daye, þe felde schalle be owrs!
The fekille faye salle faile, and fallssede be distroyede!
ʒone folk is one ffrountere, unfraistede theyme semes;
Thay make faythe and faye to þe fend selvene!

Great shall be the rewards and joys of victory.

2864 We salle in this viage victoures be holdene,
And avauntedē with voyceʒ of valyant biernēʒ;
Praysede with prynceʒ in presence of lordes,
And luffede with ladyes in dyverse londes!

2868 Aughte never sicke honoure none of oure elders,

- Unwynne ne Absolone, ne none of theis oper !
 Whene we are moste in destresse, Marie we mene,¹
 That es oure maisters seyne, þat he myche traistez ;
 2872 Melys of þat mylde qwene, that menskes us alle ;
 Who so meles of þat mayde, myskaries-he never !"
 Be þese wordes ware saide, they ware noghte ferre behynde
 Bot the lenghe of a launde, and Lorayne askryes ;
 2876 Was never siche a justynge at journe in erthe,
 In the vale of Josephate, as gestes us telles,
 Whene Julyus and Joatalle ware juggede to dy,
 As was whene þe ryche mene of þe rownde table
 2880 Ruschede in-to þe rowte one ryalle stodes !
 ffor so rathely þay rusche with roselde speris,
 That the raskaille was rade, and rane to þe grefes,
 And karede to þat courte as cowardes for ever !
 2884 "Peter !" sais syr Gawayne, "this gladdez myne herte !
 That þone gedlynges are gone, that made gret nowmbre !
 I hope that thees harlottez salle harme us bot littille,
 ffore they will hyde them in haste with-in þone holte
 enis !
 2888 Thay are feware one felde þan þay were fyrste nombirde,
 Be fourrty thousand in faythe, for alle theyre faire hostes."
 Bot one Jolyan of Jene, a geante fulle howge,
 Has jonedede one syr Jerant a justis of Walis ;
 2892 Thorowe a jerownde schelde he jogges hym thorowe,
 And a fyne gesserawnte of gentille mayles !
 Joynter and gemows he jogges in sondyre !
 One a jambe stede þis jurnee he makes ;
 2896 Thus es þe geante for-juste, that errawnte Jewe,
 And Gerarde es jocunde, and joyes hym þe more !
 Than the genatours of Genne enjoynes att ones,
 And frykis one þe frowntere wellle a fyve hundreth ;
 2900 A freke highte syr fferderike, with fulle fele oper,
 fferkes one a frusche, and fresclyche askryes
 To fyghte with oure fforreours, þat one felde hovis ;

Let them put
their trust in
Mary.

The enemy come
upon them.

Never was there
such a jousting.
Even that in the
valley of Jehosa-
phat was not
equal to it.

The rascal rout
run, but the rich
men of the Round
Table fight
valiantly.

Gawaine rejoices
at the flight of
the rabble.

A huge giant is
slain by a Justice
of Wales.

Sir Frederick at-
tacks the British
foyers.

¹ *nenene* erased, and *mene* written in margin.

The knights of
the Round Table
advance and fight
valiantly.

- And thane the ryalle renkkes of þe rownde table
 2904 Rade furthe fullē earnestly, and rydis theme agaynes,
 Mellis with the medille warde, bot they ware ille machede;
 Of siche a grett multytude was mervayle to here.
 Seyne at þe assemble the Sarazenes discoveres
 2908 The soveraynge of Sessoyne, that salvede was never;
 Gyawntis for-justede with gentillē knyghtes,
 Thorowe gesserawntes of Jene jaggede to þe herte!
 They hewe thorowe helmes hawtayne biernez,
 2912 þat þe hiltede swerdes to paire hertes rynnys!
 Than þe renkes renownde of the rownd table
 Ryffes and ruyssches downe renayede wrechēs;
 And thus they drevene to þe dede dukes and erles,
 2916 Alle þe dreghe of þe daye, with dredfullē werkes!

Sir Priamus and
his followers de-
sert to the side
of Arthur's men.

Thane syr Priamous þe prynce, in presens of lordes,
 Presez to his penowne, and pertly it hentes;
 Revertede it redily, and a-waye rydys

- 2920 To þe ryalle rowte of þe rownde table;
 And heyly his retenuz raykes hym aftyre,
 ffor they his resone had rede on his schelde ryche.
 Owte of þe scheltrone þey schede, as schepe of a folde,
 2924 And steris furth to þe stowre, and stode be þeire lorde!
 Seyne they sent to þe duke, and saide hym þise wordes,—
 “We hafe bene thy sowdeours this sex ȝere and more;
 We forsake þe to daye be serte of owre lorde!

They upbraid the
Duke of Lorraine
for not having
paid them their
wages.

- 2928 We sewe to oure soveraynge in sere kynges londes;
 Us defawtes oure feez of þis foure wyntteres;
 Thow art feble and false, and noghte bot faire wordes;
 Oure wages are werede owte, and þi werre endide,
 2932 We maye with oure wirchipe weend whethire us lykes!
 I red þowe trette of a trewe, and trofle no lengere,
 Or þow salle tyne of thi tale ten thosande or evenē.”

The Duke an-
swers furiously.

- “ffya debles!” saide þe duke, “the develle have ȝour bones!
 2936 The dawngere of ȝon dogges drede schallē I never!
 We salle dele this daye, be dedes of armes,
 My dede and my ducherye, and my dere knyghtes!

- Siche sowdeours as þe I sett bot att lyttile,
 2940 That sodanly in defawte for-sakes theire lorde!"
 The duke in his schelde and dreches no lengere,
 Drawes him a dromedarie, with dredfulle knyghtez;
 Graythes to *syr* Gawayne with fulle gret nowmbyre
 2944 Of gomes of Gernaide, that grevous are holdene;
 Thas fresche horsesede mene to þe frownt rydes,
 ffelles of oure fforreours be fourtty at ones!
 They hade foughttene before with a fyve hundrethe;
 2948 It was no ferly in faythe, þofe they faynt waxene.
 Thane *syr* Gawayne was grefede, and grypps his spere,
 And gyrdez in agayne with galyarde knyghttez;
 Metes þe maches of mees and melles hym thorowe,
 2952 As man of þis medille erthe, þat moste hade grevede:
 Bot on Chastelayne, a chylde of þe kynges chambyre,
 Was warde to *syr* Wawayne of þe weste marches,
 Cheses to *syr* Cheldride, a cheftayne noble,
 2956 With a chasyng spere he chokkes hym thurghe!
 This chekke hym eschewede be chauncez of armes;
 So þay chase þat childe, eschape may he never!
 Bot one Swyane of Sweey, with a swerde egge,
 2960 The swyers swyre-bane he swappes in sondyre!
 He swounande diede, and on þe swarthe lengede,
 Sweltes ewynne swiftly, and swanke he no more!
 Than *syr* Gawayne gretes with his gray eghne;
 2964 The guyte was a gude mane, begynnande of armes:
 ffore the charry childe so his chere chawngide,
 That the chillande watire one his chekes rynnyde!
 "Woo es me," *quod* Gawayne, "that I ne wetene hade;
 2968 I salle wage for that wye alle þat I welde,
 Bot I be wrokene on that wye, that thus has hym won-
 dyde!"
 He dresses hym drerily, and to þe duke rydes,
 Bot one *syr* Dolphyne the derfe dyghte hym agaynes,
 2972 And *syr* Gawayne hym gyrd with a grym launce,
 That the groundene spere glade to his herte!

He charges Ar-
thur's knights on
a dromedary.

Makes a great
slaughter of the
forayers.

Sir Gawayne
grasps his spear.

Child-Chatelaine
slays Sir Chil-
dred,

and is slain by
Swyan.

Gawayne grieves
for the Child.

He slays one Sir
Dolphin.

Then Hardolf,
happy in arms,

And egerly he hente owte, and hurte anoþer,
An haythene knyght, Hardolfe, happye in armes ;
2976 Sleyghly in at the slotte slyttes hym þe thorowe,
That the slydande spere of his hande sleppes !
Thare es slayne in þat slope, be elagere of his hondes,
and sixty more. Sixty slongene in a slade of sleghe men of armes !

He avenges the
Child,

2980 þose syr Gawaynne ware wo, he wayttes hym by,
And was warre of þat wye that the childe wondyde,
And with a swerde swiftly he swappes him thorowe,
That he swyftly swelte, and on þe erthe swounes !

and cuts his way
through the
enemy.

2984 And thane he raykes to þe rowte, and ruysches one helmys ;
Riche hawberkes he rente, and rasede schyldes ;
Rydes one a rawndoune, and his rayke holdes ;
Thorow owte þe rerewarde he holdes wayes,
2988 And thare raughte in the reyne this ryalle þe ryche,
And rydez in-to the rowte of þe rownde table.

The great deeds
of Arthur's chi-
valrous men se-
cure the victory.

Thane oure chevalrous men changene theire horsez,
Chases and choppes downe cheftaynes noble !
2992 Hittes fulle hertely on helmes and scheldes,
Hurtes and hewes downe haythene knyghtez !
Ketelle hattes they cleve evene to þe scholdirs !
Was never sicke a clamour of capitaynes in erthe !

2996 Thare was kynges sonnes kaughte, curtais and noble,
And knyghtes of þe contre, that knawene was ryche ;
Lordes of Lorayne and Lumbardye bothene.
Laughe was and lede in with our lele knyghttez ;

3000 Thas þat chasede that daye, their chaunce was bettire,
Swiche a cheke at a chace eschevede theyme never !

Sir Florent
presses on with
five score
knights.

When syr florent be fyghte had þe felde wonene,
He fferkes ine before with fyve score knyghttez ;
3004 Theire prayes and their prasoneres passes one aftyre,
With pylours, and pavysers, and pryse mene of armes.

Sir Gawaine fol-
lows with cau-
tion,

Thane gudly syr Gawayne gydes his knyghttez,
Gas in at þe gayneste, as gydes hym telles,
3008 ffore greffe of a garysone of fulle gret lordes
Sulde noghte gripeupe his gere, ne swyche grame wurche :

ffore-thy they stode at the straytez, and with his stale
hovede,

Tille his prayes ware paste the pathe that he dredis ;

- 3012 Whene they the cete myghte see that the kyng seggede, and sees the city
which Arthur
was besieging
won on the same
day ;
Sothely the same daye was wit asawte wonnene.

An hawrawde hyes before, the beste of the lordes,

Hom at þe herbergage, owt of tha hyghe londes ;

- 3016 Tornys tytte to þe tente, and to the kynges telles

Alle the tale sothely, and how they hade syede ;—

“Alle thy forreours are fere, that forrayede with-owttyne, for Arthur had
been told of the
victory of his
knights by an
herald,
Sir fflorent, and syr ffloidas, and alle thy ferse knyghtez :

- 3020 Thay hafe forrayede and foghtene with fulle gret nowm-
byre,

And fele of thy foo-mene has broghte owt of lyffe !

Oure wirchipfulle wardayne es wele eschevyde,

ffor he has wonne to-daye wirchipp for evere !

- 3024 He has Dolfyne slayne, and þe duke takyne !

Many dowghty es dede by dynt of his hondes !

He has præsoners price, pryncez and erles,

Of þe richeste blode þat regnys in erthe !

- 3028 Alle thy chevallrous mene faire are eschewede,

Bot a childe Chasteleyne myschance es befallene.”

“Hawtayne,” sais þe king, “harawde be Criste !

Thow has helyd myne herte, I hete the for-sothe !

- 3032 I ȝife the in Hamptone a hundreth pownde large.”

The kyng þan to assawte he sembles his knyghtez,

With somercastelle and sowe appone sere halves ;

Skystis his skotiferis,, and skayles the wallis,

- 3036 And iche wache has his warde with wiese mene of armes.

Thane boldly þay buske, and bendes engynes,

Payses in pylotes and proves theire castes ;

Mynsteris and masondewes they malle to þe erthe,

- 3040 Chirches and chapelles chalke whitte blawnchede.

Stone tepelles fulle styffe in þe strete ligges,

Chawmbyrs with chymnes, and many cheefe inns ;

Paysede and pelid downe playsterede walles ;

and how Sir Ga-
waine had won
mighty honour.

Then he rejoiced
and gave a hun-
dred pounds lar-
gess,

and, assembling
his knights, as-
saults the city.

They carry all
before them.

- 3044 The pyne of þe pople was pete for to here!
 Thane þe ducheze hire dyghte with damesels ryche,
 The cowntas of Crasyne with hir clere madyns,
 Knelis downe in the kynnelles thare the kyng hovede,
- 3048 On a coverede horse comlyli arayede;
 They knewe hym by contenaunce, and criede fulle
 lowde,—
- “Kyng crownede of kynde, take kepe to þese wordes!
 We be-seke þow, *syr*, as soveraynge and lorde,
- 3052 That þe safe us to daye, for sake of þoure Criste!
 Sende us some socoure, and saughte with the pople,
 Or þe cete be sodaynly with assawte wonnene!”
 He weres his vesere with a vowt noble,
- 3056 With vesage vertuous, this valyant bierne;
 Moles to hir mildly with fulle meke wordes,—
- “Salle no mysse do þow, ma-dame, þat to me lenges;
 I gyf þow chartire of pes, and þoure cheefe maydens,
- 3060 The childre and þe chaste mene, the chevalrous knyghtez;
 The duke es in dawngere, dredis it bott lyttlylle!
 He salle I dene þe fulle wele, dout þow noghte elles.”
 Thane sent he one iche a syde to certayne lordez,
- 3064 ffor to leve þe assawte, the cete was þoldene;
 With þe erle eldeste sone he sent hym þe kayes,
 And seside þe same dyghte, be sent of þe lordes:
 The duke to Dovere es nyghte, and alle his dere knyghtez,
- 3068 To duelle in dawngere and dole þe dayes of hys lyve,
 Thare fleedeat the ferrere þate folke withowttynenomyre,
 ffor ferde of *syr* fflorent and his fers knyghtez;
 Voydes the cete and to the wode rynnys,
- 3072 With vetaile, and vesselle, and vestoure so ryche:
 Thay buske upe a banere abowne þe brode þates
 Of *syr* fflorent in ffay, so fayne was he never!
 The knyghte hovys on a hylle, beholde to þe wallys,
- 3076 And saide, “I see be þone syngne the cete es oures!”
 Sir Arthure enters anone with hostes arayede,
 Evene at þe undrone etles to lenge;

The ladies sue
for mercy.

Arthur promises
that no hurt shall
befall them.

The city is sur-
rendered.

The Duke is sent
to Dover as a
prisoner.

Many of the in-
habitants escape.

The knights see
the sign of the
capture of the
city.

Arthur preserves
strict discipline.

- In iche levere on lowde the kyng did crye,
 3080 Of payne of lyf and lym and lesynge of londes,
 That no lele ligemane that to hym lonngede
 Sulde lye be no ladysse, ne be no lele maydyns,
 Ne be no burgesse wyffe, better ne werse ;
 3084 Ne no biernez myse-bide, that to þe burghe longede.

- W^hene þe kyng Arthure hade lely conquerid,
 And the castelle coverede of þe kythe riche,
 Alle þe crowelle and kene, be craftes of armes,
 3088 Captayns and constables, knewe hym for lorde.
 He devysede and delte to dyverse lordez,
 A dowere for þe ducheze and hir dere childire ;
 Wroghte wardaynes by wytte to welde alle þe londez,
 3092 That he had wonnene of werre, thorowe his wise knyghtez.
 Thus in Lorayne he lenges as lord in his awene,
 Settez lawes in the lande, as hym leefe toghte ;
 And one þe Lammese daye to Lucerne he wendeze,
 3096 Lengez thare at laysere with lykyng*e* i-nowe ;
 Thare his galays ware graythede, a fulle gret nombyre,
 Alle gleterand as glase, undire grene hyllys,
 With cabanes coverede for kynges anoyntede,
 3100 With clothes of clere golde for knyghtez and oþer ;
 Sone stowede theire stuffe, and stablede þeire horses,
 Strekes streke over þe strem in-to þe strayte londez.
 Now he moves his myghte with myrthes of herte,
 3104 Overe mowntes so hye, þase mervailous wayes ;
 Gosse in by Goddarde, the garette be wynnys,
 Graythes the garnisone grisely wondes !
 Whene he was passede the heghte, than the kyng hovys
 3108 With his hole bataylle, be-haldande abowte,
 Lukande one Lumbarddye, and one lowde melys,—
 “ In þone lykande londe, lorde be I thynke.”
 Thane they cayre to Combe, with kynges anoyntede,
 3112 That was kyde of þe coste, kay of alle oþer :

Arthur provides
for the govern-
ment of Lorraine
which he had
conquered.

At Lammas he
goes to Lucerne.

His fair galleys
are assembled.

He leads his
forces over the
high mountains
by marvellous
ways ;

passes the St.
Gothard after de-
feating the gar-
rison ;

looks down on
Lombardy, and
advances to
Como.

- Sir fflorent and *syr* flordidas þan fowndes before,
 With ffreke mene of ffraunce welle a fyve hundreth ;
 To þe cete unsene thay soghte at þe gayneste,
 And sett an embuschement, als þeme-selſe lykys ;
 Thane ischewis owt of þat cete fulle sone be þe morne,
 Slale discoverours, skyftes theire horses ;
 Than skyftes þes skoverours, and skippes one hyllis,
 Discoveres for skulkers that they no skathe lymppene ;
 Poveralle and pastorelles passede one aftyre,
 With porkes to pasture at the price ȝates ;
 Boyes in þe subarbis bourdene ffulle heghe,
 At a bare synglere that to þe bente rynnys.
 Thane brekes oure buschement, and the brigge wynnes,
 Brayedez in-to þe burghe with baners displayede,
 Stekes and stablis thorowe that them aȝayne-stondes ;
 ffowre stretis, or þay stynte, they stroyene fore evere !
 Now es the conquerour in Combe, and his courte holdes
 With-in the kyde castelle, with kynges enoynttede ;
 Be consaillez the commons þat to þe kyth lengez,
 Comfourthes þe carefuller with knyghtly wordez ;
 Made a captayne kene a knyghte of hys awene,
 Bot alle the contré and he fulle sone ware accordide.
 The syre of Melane herde saye þe cete was wonnene,
 And send to Arthure sertayne lordes,
 Grete sommes of golde, sexti horse chargegid,
 Be-soghte hyme as soverayne to socoure þe pople,
 And saide he wolde sothely be sugette for ever,
 And make hyme servece and suytte for his sere londes ;
 ffor plesaunce of Pawnce, and of Pownte Tremble,
 ffor Pyse, and for Pavy, he profers fulle large,
 Bothe purpur, and palle, and precious stonys,
 Palfrayes for any prynce, and provede stedes ;
 And ilke a ȝere for Melane a melione of golde,
 Mekely at Martynmesse to menske with his hordes ;
 And ever withowttyne askynge he and his ayers
 Be homagers to Arthure, whilles his lyffe lastis.

Sir Florent plants
an ambush,

and captures the
city.

The city Combe
is won.

The Lord of
Milan sends to
offer submission
and tribute.

The kynge be his concelle a condethe hym sendis,
And he es comene to Combe, and knewe hym as lorde.

He pays homage
to Arthur at
Como.

3152 **I**nto Tuskané he tournez, whene þus wele tymede,
Takes townnes fullé tyte with towrrs fullé heghe;

Arthur enters
Tuscany,

Walles he welte downe, wondyd knyghtez,
Towrrs he turnes, and turmentez þe pople!
Wroghte wedewes fullé wlonke, wrotherayle synges,

3156 Ofte wery and wepe, and wryngene theire handis;
And alle he wastys with werre, thare he awaye rydez;
Thaire welthes and theire wonnyges, wandrethe he
wroghte!

and ravages the
country.

Thus they spryngene and sprede, and sparis bot lyttille,
3160 Spoylles dispetouslye, and spillis their vynes;
Spendis un-sparely, þat sparede was lange,
Spedis theme to Spolett with speris inewe!
ffro Spayne in-to Spruyslande the worde of hyme
sprynges,

3164 And spekynges of his spencis, disspite es fullé hugge!
Towarde Viterbe this valyant avires the reynes;
Aviselly in þat vale he retailles his biernez,
With vernage, and oþer wyne, and venysone bakene;

He pitches his
camp in the Vale
of Viterbo.

3168 And one the vicounte londes he visez to lenge.
Vertely the avawmwarde voydez theire horsez;
In the Vertennone vale, the vines imangez,
Thare suggeournes this souerayne, with solace in herte,

3172 To see whene the senatours sent any wordes;
Revelle with riche wyne, riotes hym selfene,
This roy with his ryalle mene of þe rownde table,
With myrthis, and melodye, and many kyne gamnes;

The king and his
knights make
great merriment.

3176 Was never meriere men made one this erthe!

Bot one a Saterdaye at none, a sevenyghte thare aftyre,
The konyngeste cardynalle that to the courte lengede
Knelis to þe conquerour, and karpes thire wordes,—

The cunningest
Cardinal of Rome
is sent to him,

3180 Prayes hym for þe pes, and profyrs fullé large,
To hafe pete of þe Pope, þat put was at-undere;
Be-soghte hym of surrawns, for sake of oure Lorde,

and offers that
the Pope shall
crown him as
Sovereign in
Rome.

Hostages are
given for the
truth of his
words.

The Roman Sena-
tors are solemnly
feasted.

Arthur glorifies
himself for his
great success.

He will be crown-
ed at Christmas

- Bot a sevenyghte daye to þay ware alle semblede,
 3184 And they schulde sekerlye hym see the Sonondaye
 þeraftyre,
 In the cete of Rome, as soveraynge and lorde ;
 And crowne hym kyndly with krysomede hondes,
 With his ceptre, as soveraynge and lorde :
- 3188 Of this undyrtakyngꝰ ostage are comyne,
 Of ayers fulle avenaunt awughte score childrenne,
 In toges of tarsse fulle richelye attyrde,
 And betuke theme the kyngꝰ, and his clere knyghttes.
- 3192 When they had tretide thiere trewe, with trowmpyngꝰ
 þerafter
 They tryne unto a tente, whare tables whare raysede ;
 The kyngꝰ hyme selfen es sette, and certayne lordes,
 Undyre a sylure of sylke sawghte at the burdez :
- 3196 Alle the senatours are sette sere be þame one,
 Serfed solely with selcouthe metes :
 The kyngꝰ myghty of myrthe, with his milde wordes,
 Rehetez the Romayne at his riche table,
- 3200 Comforthes the cardynalle so kynghtly hyme selvene ;
 And this roye ryalle, as romawns us tellis,
 Reverence the Romayns in his riche table ;
 The tawghte mene and þe conyngꝰ, whene theme tyme
 thoghte,
- 3204 Tas theire lefe at þe kyngꝰ, and tornede agayne ;
 To þe cete þat nyghte thaye soughte at þe gayneste,
 And thus the ostage of Rome with Arthure es levede.
- 3208 **T**han this roy royalle rehersys theis wordes,—
 “Now may we revelle and riste, fore Rome es
 oure awene !
 Make oure ostage at ese, þise avenaunt childyrene,
 And luk ȝe hondene theme alle that in myne oste lengez ;
 The emperour of Almayne, and alle theis este marches,
- 3212 We salle be overlyngꝰ of alle þat one the erthe lengez !
 We wille by þe crosse dayes encroche þeis loydez,
 And at þe Crystynmesse daye be crownned ther-aftyre ;

- Ryngne in my ryalltes, and holde my rownde table,
 3216 Withe the rentes of Rome, as me beste lykys :
 Syne graythe over þe grette see with gud menē of armes,
 To revenge the renke that one the rode dyede !”
 Thane this comlyche knyge, as cronyeles tellys,
 3220 Bownnys brathely to bede with a blythe herte ;
 Of he slynges with sleghte, and slakes gyrdille,
 And fore slewthe of slomowre one a slepe fallis.
 Bot be ane aftyre mydnyghte alle his mode changede ;
 3224 He mett in the morne while fulle *mervaylous* dremes !
 And whene his dredefulle drem whas drefene to þe ende,
 The kyngne dares for dowte dye as he scholde ;
 Sendes aftyre phylosophers, and his affraye telles,—
 3228 “ Senē I was formede in fayth, so ferde whas I never !
 ffor-thy rawnsakes redyly, and rede me my swefennys,
 And I salle redily and ryghte rehersenē the sothe :
 Me-thoughte I was in a wode willed mynē one,
 3232 That I ne wiste no waye whedire þat I scholde,
 ffore wolvez, and whilde swynne, and wykkyde bestez,
 Walkede in that wasternne, wathes to seche ;
 Thare lyouns fulle lothely lykkyde þeire tuskes,
 3236 Alle fore lapyngē of blude of my lele knyghtez !
 Thurghe þat foreste I flede, thare floures whare heghe,
 ffor to fele me for ferde of tha foule thynggez ;
 Merkede to a medowe with montayngnes enclosyde,
 3240 The meryeste of medill-erthe that menē myghte be-holde !
 The close was in compas castyne alle abowte,
 With claver and clereworte clede evene over ;
 The vale was evene rownde with vynes of silver,
 3244 Alle with grapis of golde, gretter ware never !
 Enhorilde with arborye and alkyns trees,
 Erberis fulle honeste, and byrdez þere undyre ;
 Alle froytez foddennid was þat floreschede in erthe,
 3248 ffaire frithed in frawnke apponē tha free bowes ;
 Whas thare no downkyngē of dewe that oghte dere
 scholde,

in Rome, and
hold his Round
Table there.

He goes to bed
and dreams.

He sends for his
philosophers, and
tells them the
dream.

He was in a
wood among wild
beasts,

which were lick-
ing from their
teeth the blood
of his knights.

He flies to a
beautiful meadow
enclosed with
mountains, and
having vines of
silver and grapes
of gold.

A beautiful
duchess descends
from the clouds,

dressed in gorge-
ous apparel,

who whirled a
strange wheel
with her hands,

upon which was
a chair made of
silver, and orna-
mented with car-
buncles.

Six kings, cling-
ing to the wheel,
strive to reach
the chair, but
they all fall to
the ground.
Each one of them
speaks sepa-
rately, and la-
ments his life
past and gone,
which had been
spent in riot and
wickedness,

therefore he is
damned for ever.

The first was a
little man with
eyes brighter
than silver.

- With þe drowghte of þe daye alle drye ware þe flores!
Than discendis in the dale, downe fra þe clowddez,
3252 A duchess dere-worthily dyghte in dyaperde wedis,
In a surcott of sylke fulle selkouthely hewede,
Alle with loyotour overlaide lowe to þe hemmes,
And with ladily lappes the lenghe of a ȝerde,
3256 And alle redily reversside with rebanes of golde,
Bruchez and besauntez, and oþer bryghte stonys,
With hir bake and hir breste was brochede alle over,
With kelle and with corenalle clenliche arrayede,
3260 And þat so comly of colour one knowene was never!
A-bowte cho whirllide a whele with hir whitte hondez,
Over-whelme alle qwayntely þe whele as cho scholde;
The rowelle whas rede golde with ryalle stonys,
3264 Raylide with reched and rubyes inewe;
The spekes was splentide alle with speltis of silver,
The space of a spere lenghe springande fulle faire;
There one was a chayere of chalke-whytte silver,
3268 And chekyrde with charebocke chawngynge of hewes;
Appone þe compas ther clewide kyngis one rawe,
With corowns of clere golde þat krakede in sondire:
Sex was of þat setille fulle sodaynliche fallene,
3272 Ilke a segge by hyme selfe, and saide theis wordez,—
‘That ever I regnede one þir rog, me rewes it ever!
Was never roye so riche that regnede in erthe!
Whene I rode in my rowte, roughete I noghte elles,
3276 Bot revaye, and revelle, and rawnsonne the pople!
And thus I drife forthe my dayes, whilles I dreghe
myghte,
And there-fore derflyche I am dampnede for ever!’
The laste was a litylle mane that laide was be-nethe,
3280 His leskes laye alle lene and latheliche to schewe,
The lokkes lyarde and longe the lenghe of a ȝerde,
His lire and his lyghame lamede fulle sore;
þe two eyne of the byeryne was brighttere þane silver,
3284 The toþer was ȝalowere thene the ȝolke of a naye,—

- ‘I was lorde,’ *quod* the lede, ‘of londes i-newe,
And alle ledis me lowttede that lengede in erthe;
And nowe es lefte me no lappe my lygham to hele,
3288 Bot lightly now am I loste, leve iche mane the sothe!’
The secunde *syr* forsothe þat sewede themæ aftyre,
Was sekerare to my sighte, and saddare in armes;
Ofte he syghede unsownde, and said theis wordes,—
3292 ‘On þone see hafe I sittene, as soverayne and lorde,
And ladys me lovede to lappe in theyre armes;
And nowe my lordehippes are loste, and laide for ever!’
The thirde thorowely was throo, and thikke in the
schuldyrs,
3296 A thra man to thrette of, there thretty ware gaderide;
His dyademe was droppede downe, dubbyde with stonys,
Endente alle with diamawndis, and dighte for þe nonis;
‘I was dredde in my dayes,’ he said, ‘in dyverse rewmes,
3300 And now dampned to þe dede, and dole es the more!’
The fourte was a faire mane, and forsesy in armes,
þe fayreste of feigure that fourmede was ever!
‘I was frekke in my faithe,’ he said, ‘whilles I one
fowlde regnede,
3304 ffamows in fferre londis, and floure of alle kynges;
Now es my face defadide, and foule es me hapnede,
ffor I am fallene fro ferre, and frendles by-levyde!’
The fifte was a faire mane þane fele of thies oþer,
3308 A fforsey mane and a ferse, with fomand lippis;
He fongede faste one þe feleyghes, and fayled his armes,
Bot þit he failede and felle a fyfty fote large;
Bot þit he sprange and sprete, and spraddene his armes,
3312 And one þe spere lenghe spekes, he spekes þire wordes—
‘I was in Surrye a syr, and sett be myne one,
As soverayne and seynngnour of sere kynges londis;
Now of my solace I am fulle sodanly fallene,
3316 And forsake of my syne, þone cete es me rewede!’
The sexte hade a sawtere semliche bowndene,
With a surepel of silke sewede fulle faire,

He had been lord
of many lands,
but now was lost.

The second had
been sovereign of
the sea, and loved
of ladies.

The third was
stout and strong.

He had been
mightily feared
in his day.

The fourth was
very fair, but foul
mischance had
now happened to
him.

The fifth was very
fierce and violent.

He had been
sovereign in
Syria, but was
now fallen.

The sixth had a
psalter well-
bound, a harp,
and a sling.

- A harpe and a hande-slynge with harde flynte stones ;
 3320 What harmes he has hente he halowes fulle sone,—
 ‘I was demede in my dayes,’ he said, ‘of dedis of armes
 One of the doughtyeste that duelled in erthe ;
 Bot I was merride one molde in my moste strengththis,
 3324 With this maydene so mylde, þat mofes us alle.’
 Two kynges ware clymbande, and claverande one heghe,
 The creste of þe compas they covette fulle þerne ;
 ‘This chaire of charbokle,’ they said, ‘we chalange
 here aftyre,
 3328 As two of þe cheffeste chosene in erthe!’
 The childre ware chalke-whitte, chekys and oþer,
 Bot the chayere abownne chevede they never :
 The forthirmaste was freely with a frount large,
 3332 The faireste of fyssnanny þat fourmede was ever ;
 And he was buskede in a blee of a blewe noble,
 With flourdelice of golde floreschede al over ;
 The toþer was cledde in a cote alle of clene silver,
 3336 With a comliche crosse corvene of golde,
 ffowre crosselettes krafty by þe crosse riftes,
 And ther-by knewe I the kyng, þat crystnode hyme
 semyde.
 Thane I went to þat wlonke, and wynly hire gretis,
 3340 And cho said, ‘welcome i-wis! wele arte thou
 fowndene ;
 The aughte to wirchipe my wille, and thou wele cowthe,
 Of alle the valyant men that ever was in erthe ;
 ffore alle thy wirchipe in werre by me has thou wonnene,
 3344 I hafe bene frendely freke, and fremmede tille oþer ;
 That has þow fowndene in faithe, and fele of þi biernez,
 ffore I fellid downe syr Frolle with frowarde knyghtes ;
 ffore-thi the fruytes of Fraunce are freely thynne awene.
 3348 Thow salle þe chayere escheve, I chese þe my-selfene,
 Be-fore alle þe cheftaynes chosene in this erthe.’
 Scho lifte me up lightly with hir lene hondes,
 And sette me softly in the see, þe septre me rechede ;
 and sit therein.

He had been held
the doughtiest in
his day, but had
been marred by
the maiden.

Two kings are
seen who chal-
lenge the chair
hereafter, but fail
to reach it.

The one was pass-
ing fair of feature,
with a mighty
forehead.

The other bore
the cross as an
ornament in to-
ken that he was
a Christian.

Arthur accosts
the Duchess, who
welcomes him.

- 3352 Craftely with a kambe cho kembede myne hevede,
 That the krispane kroke to my crownne raughte ;
 Dressid one me a diademe, that dighte was fulle faire, The kingly orna-
 ments are given
 to him.
 And syne profres me a pome pighte fulle of faire stonys,
- 3356 Enamelde with azoure, the erth there-one depayntide,
 Selkylde with the salte see appone sere halfes,
 In sygne þat I sothely was soverayne in erthe :
 Than broght cho me a brande with fulle bryghte hiltes, A sword with
 bright hilt is
 brought for him.
- 3360 And bade me brawdysche þe blade, ' þe brande es myne
 awene :
 Many swayne with þe swynge has the swtte levede ;
 ffor whilles thow swanke with the swerde, it swykkede
 þe never.'
 Than raykes cho with roo, and riste whene hir likede,
- 3364 To þe ryndes of þe wode, richere was never ;
 Was no pomarie so pighte of prynee in erthe,
 Ne nonne apparaylle so prowde, bot paradys one.
 Scho bad þe bowes scholde bewe downe, and bryng to He is taken to
 the wood, and the
 boughs are made
 to yield their
 fruit to him.
 my hondes
- 3368 Of þe beste that they bare one brawnches so heghe ;
 Than they heldede to hir heste alle holly at ones,
 The hegheste of iche a hirste, I hette þow forsothe :
 Scho bade me fyrthe noghte þe fruyte, bot fonde whilles He is bid take
 freely of the
 finest.
 me likede,
- 3372 ' ffonde of þe fyneste, thow freliche byerne,
 And reche to the ripeste, and ryotte thy selvene !
 Riste, thow ryalle roye, for Rome es thynne awene !
 And I salle redily rolle the roo at þe gayneste,
- 3376 And reche the þe riche wyne in rynsede coupes.'
 Thane cho wente to the welle by þe wode enis, The lady draws
 wine for him out
 of the stream,
 That alle wellyde of wyne, and wonderliche rynnes ;
 Kaughte up a coppe-fulle, and coverde it faire ;
- 3380 Scho bad me dereliche drawe, and drynke to hir selfene : and bids him
 drink to her.
 And thus cho lede me abowte the lenghe of an owre,
 With alle likynge and luffe, þat any lede scholde ;
 Bot at þe myddaye fulle ewyne all hir mode chaungede, But at mid-day
 all was changed.

- 3384 And mad myche manace with mervayllous wordez ;
 Whene I cryede appone hire, cho kest downe hir browes,
 ‘Kyng, thow karpes for noghte, be Criste þat me made !
 ffor thow salle lose this layke, and thi lyfe aftyre !
- She speaks to him fiercely, and tells him that he shall lose his life.
- 3388 Thow has lyffede in delytte and lordchippes inewe !’
 Abowte scho whirles the whele, and whirles me undire,
 Tille alle my quarters þat while whare waste al to peces !
 And with that chayere my chyne was chopped in sondire !
- She gives the wheel a whirl and sends him flying from the chair, bruised and injured.
- 3392 And I hafe cheveride for chele, sen me this chance
 happenede.
 Than wakkenyde I i-wys, alle wery for-dremyde,
 And now wate thow my woo, worde as þe lykes.”
- The philosophers interpret the dream, and tell Arthur that his good fortune is passed.
- “ffreke,” sais the philosophre, “thy fortune es passede !
 3396 ffor thow salle fynd hir thi foo, frayste whene the lykes !
 Thow arte at þe hegheste, I hette the for-sothe !
 Chalange nowe when thow wille, thow chevys no more !
 Thow has schedde myche blode, and schalkes distroyede,
- He is to prepare for his end,
- 3400 Sakeles in sirquytrie, in sere kynges landis ;
 Schryfe the of thy schame, and schape for thyne ende !
 Thow has a schewynge, *syr* kyng, take kepe ȝif the like !
 ffor thow salle fersely falle with-in fyve wynters !
- and to found Abbeys in France.
- 3404 ffownde abbayes in ffraunce, þe froytez are theyne awene,
 ffore ffoille, and for fferawnt, and for thir ferse knyghttis,
 That thow fremydly in ffraunce has faye belevede ;
 Take kepe ȝitte of *oper* kynges, and kaste in thyne herte,
- He is bid take warning from the other kings who had tried the chair.
 The first was Alexander ;
 the second Hector ;
 the third Julius Cæsar ;
- 3408 That were conquerours kydde, and crownede in erthe ;
 The eldeste was Alexandere, þat alle þe erthe lowttede ;
 The toþer Ector of Troye, the chevalrous gume ;
 The thirde Julyus Cesare, þat geant was holdene,
- the fourth Sir Judas, the Macabees ;
- 3412 In iche jorne gentille, ajuggede with lordes ;
 The ferthe was *syr* Judas, a justere fulle nobille,
 The maysterfulle Makabee, the myghttyeste of strengthes ;
 The fyfte was Josue, þat joly mane of armes,
- the fifth Joshua ;
- 3416 That in Jerusalem oste fulle myche joye lymppede ;
 The sexte was David þe dere, demyd with kynges
 One of þe doughtyeste þat dubbede was ever,
- the sixth was David, who slew great Goliath.

- ffor he slewe with a slynge, be sleyghte of his handis,
 3420 Golyas the grette gome, grymmeste in erthe ;
 Syne endittede in his dayes alle the dere psalmes,
 þat in þe sawtire ere sette with selcouthe wordes ;
 The two clymbande kynges, I knawe it forsothe,
 3424 Salle Karolus be callide, the kyng sone of Fraunce ;
 He salle be crowelle and kene, and conquerour holdene,
 Covere be conqueste contres ynewe ;
 He salle encroche the crowne that Crist bare hym selfene,
 3428 And þat lifeliche launce, that lepe to his herte,
 When he was crueyfiede on crose, and alle þe kene naylis,
 Knyghtly he salle conquere to Cristyne men hondes :
 The toþer salle be Godfraye, that Gode schalle revenge
 3432 One þe Gud Frydaye with galyarde knyghtes ;
 He salle of Lorrayne be lorde, be leefe of his fadire,
 And syne in Jerusalem myche joye happyne,
 ffor he salle cover the crosse be craftes of armes,
 3436 And synne be corownde kynge, with krysme enoynttede ;
 Salle no duke in his dayes siche destanye happyne,
 Ne siche myschefe dreghe, whene trowthe salle be tryede !
 ffore-thy ffortune þe fetches to fulfille the nowmbyre,
 3440 Alles nynne of þe nobileste namede in erthe ;
 This salle in romance be redde with ryalle knyghttes,
 Rekkenede and renownde with ryotous kynges,
 And demyd one domesdaye, for dedis of armes,
 3444 ffor þe doughtyeste þat ever was duelland in erthe :
 So many clerkis and kynges salle karpe of þoure dedis,
 And kepe þoure conquestez in cronycle for ever !
 Bot the wolfes in the wode, and therwilde bestes,
 3448 Are some wikkyd mene that werrayes thy rewmes,
 Es entirde in thyn absence to werraye thy pople,
 And alyenys and osten of uncouthe landis :
 Thow getis tydandis I trowe, within tene dayes,
 3452 That some torfere es tydde, sene thow fro home turnede ;
 I rede thow rekkyne and reherse un-resonable dedis,
 Ore the repenttes fullæ rathe allæ thi rewthe werkes !

Of the two kings
who were climb-
ing, one should
be called Carolus
of France ;

the other God-
frey of Lorraine,
who should re-
cover the true
cross.

Arthur is needed
to make up the
number of the
nine noblest.

He shall be cele-
brated for ever
as the doughtiest
on earth.
Many clerks shall
tell of his deeds.

The wild beasts
are wicked men
that are worrying
his people.

He will have
some tidings
within ten days.

He is bid to re-
pent and amend.

Mane, amende thy mode, or thow myshappene,

3456 And mekely aske mercy for mede of thy saule!"

The king rises
and puts on his
robes.

Thane rysez the riche kyng, and rawghte one his wedys,
A reedde actone of Rosse, the richeste of floures,

A pesane, and a paunsone, and a pris girdille;

3460 And one he henttis a hode of scharlette fulle riche,

A pavys pillione hatt, þat pighte was fulle faire

With perry of þe oryent, and precyous stones;

His gloves gayliche gilte, and gravene by þe hemmys,

3464 With graynes of rubyes fulle gracious to schewe:

His hede grehownde, and his bronde, ande no byerne elles,

And bownnes over a brode mede, with breth at his herte;

ffurth he stalkis a sty by þa stille enys,

3468 Stotays at a hey strette, studyande hyme one;

He sees a man
approaching in
strange attire,

Att the surs of þe sonne, he sees there commande,

Raykande to Romewarde the redyeste wayes,

A renke in a rownde cloke, with righte rowmme clothes,

3472 With hatte, and with heyghe schone homely and rownde;

With flatte ferthynges the freke was floreschede alle over,

Many schredys and schragges at his skyrttes hynnges,

With scrippe, ande with slawyne, and skalopis i-newe,

who appears like
a pilgrim.

3476 Both pyke and palme, alles pilgram hym scholde:

The gome graythely hym grette, and bade gode morwene;

The kyng lordelye hymselfe, of langage of Rome,

Of Latyne corroumppede alle, fulle lovely hym menys,—

He asks him
whither he is
going,

3480 "Whedire wilnez thowe, wye, walkande thyne onne?

Qwhylls þis werlde es o werre, a wawhte I it holde!

Here es ane enmye with oste, undire þone vynes;

And they see the for-sothe, sorowe the be-tyddes;

3484 Bot þif thow hafe condethe of þe kyng selfene,

and tells him the
dangers of the
way.

Knaves wille kille the, and keppe at thow haves;

And if þou halde þe hey waye, they hente the also,

Bot if thow hastyly hafe helpe of his hende knyghttes."

3488 **T**hane karpes syr Cradoke to the kyng selfene,

The stranger
knight says that
he fears no dan-
gers.

"I salle for-gyffe hym my dede, so me Gode helpe!

Onye grome undire Gode, that one this grownde walkes!

Latte the keneste come, that to þe kyng langes,
 3492 I salle encountire hyme as knyghte, so Criste hafe my
 sawle !

ffor thou may noghte reche me, ne areste thy selfene,
 þoffe thou be richely arayede in fulle riche wedys ;
 I wille noghte wonde for no werre, to wende whare me
 likes,

3496 Ne for no wy of this werlde, þat wroghte es one erthe !
 Bot I wille passe in pilgrimage þis pas unto Rome,
 To purchese me perdonne of the pape selfene ;
 And of paynes of purgatorie be plenerly assoyllde ;

He is bound in
 pilgrimage to
 Rome.

3500 Thane salle I seke sekirly my soverayne lorde,
 Sir Arthure of Englande, that avenaunt byerne !
 ffor he es in this empire, as hathelle men me telles,
 Ostayande in this oryente with awfulle knyghtes."

Then he has to
 find Arthur of
 England.

3504 "Fro qwyne come þou, kene mane," *quod* þe kyng
 thane,

"That knawes kyng Arthure, and his knyghttes also ?
 Was þou ever in his courte, qwylls he in kyth lengede ?
 Thow karpes so kyndly, it comforthes myne herte !

Arthur demands
 of the knight who
 he is.

3508 Well wele has þou wente, and wysely þou sechis,
 ffor þou arte Bretowne bierne, as by thy brode speche."

"Me awghte to knowe þe kyng, he es my kyddde lorde,
 And I calde in his courte a knyghte of his chambire ;

He tells him that
 his name is Sir
 Cradok, a knight
 of Arthur's cham-
 ber, and keeper of
 Caerleon.

3512 Sir Craddoke was I callide, in his courte riche,
 Kepare of Karlyone, undir the kyng selfene ;
 Nowe am I cachede owtt of kyth, *with* kare at my herte,
 And that castelle es cawghte *with* uncowthe ledys."

3516 Than the comliche kyng kaughte hym in armes,
 Keste of his ketille-hatte, and kyssede hyme fulle sone,
 Saide, "welcome, *syr* Craddoke, so Criste mott me helpe !
 Dere cosyne of kynde, thowe coldis myne herte !

The king kisses
 and welcomes Sir
 Cradok.

3520 How faris it in Bretaynne, *with* alle my bolde berynes ?
 Are they brettene, or brynte, or broughte owte of lyve ?
 Kene þou me kyndely whatte caase es be-fallene ;
 I kepe no credens to crafe, I knawe the for trewe."

- Sir Cradok tells
him of the evil
deeds of Modred.
- 3524 "Sir, thi wardane es wikkede, and wilde of his dedys;
ffor he wandreth has wroghte, sen þou awaye passede;
He has castelles encrochede, and corownde hym selvene,
Kaughte in alle þe rentis of þe rownde tabille;
- 3528 He devisede þe rewme, and delte as hym likes;
Dubbede of þe Danmarkes, dukes and erlles,
Disseveride þeme sondirwise, and cites distroyede;
To Sarazenes and Sessoynes, appone sere halves,
- He has levied
forces of paynims
and infidels,
- 3532 He has semblede a sorte of selcouthe berynes,
Soveraynes of Surgenale, and sowdeours many,
Of Peyghtes and Paynymys, and provede knyghttes
Of Irelande and Orgaile, owtlawede berynes;
- 3536 Alle thaa laddes are knyghttes þat lange to þe mowntes,
And ledyng and lordechipe has alle, alles theme selfe
likes;
And there es *syr* Childrike a cheftayne holdyne,
That ilke chevalrous mane, he charges thy pople;
- who rob the re-
ligious and ravish
the nuns.
- 3540 They robbe thy religeous, and ravichse thi nonnes,
And redy ryddis *with* his rowtte to rawnsone þe povere;
ffro Humbyre to Hawyke he haldys his awene,
And alle the countré of Kentt be covenawnte entayllide;
- He has seized the
whole of England
and all Arthur's
castles.
- 3544 The comliche castelles that to the corowne langede,
The holtes, and the hare wode, and the harde bankkes,
Alle þat Henguste and Hors hent in þeire tyme;
Att Southamptone on the see es sevene skore chippes,
- He has a fleet of
seven score ships
at Southampton.
- 3548 ffrawghte fullé of ferse folke, owt of ferre landes,
ffor to fyghte *with* thy ffrappe, whene þow theme assailles.
Bot þitt a worde witterly, thowe watte noghte þe werste!
He has weddede Waynore, and hir his wieffe holdis,
- But, worst of all,
he has taken
Guinever, and
lives with her as
his wife!
- 3552 And wounnys in the wilde bowndis of þe weste marches,
And has wroghte hire with childe, as wittnesse telles!
Off alle þe wyes of þis worlde, woo motte hym worthe,
Alles wardayne unworthe womené to þeme!
- 3556 Thus has *syr* Modrede merrede us alle!
ffor-thy I merkede *over* thees mowntes, to mene þe the
sothe."

Than the burliche kyng, for brethe at his herte,
And for this botelesse bale alle his ble chaungide !

Arthur is overcome by the tidings, and vows revenge.

3560 "By þe rode," sais þe roye, "I salle it revenge !
Hym salle repente fulle rathe alle his rewthe werkes !"
Alle wepande for woo he went to his tentis ;
Unwynly this wyesse kyng, he wakkenysse his berynes,

3564 Clepid in a clarioune kynges and othire,
Callys theme to concelle, and of þis cas tellys,—
"I am with tresone be-trayede, for alle my trewe dedis !
And alle my travayle es tynt, me tydis no bettire !

He calls a Council and tells them the ill news.

3568 Hym salle torfere betyde, þis tresone has wroghte,
And I may traistely hym take, as I am trew lorde !
This es Modrede, þe mane that I most traystede,
Has my castelles encrochede, and corownde hym selvene,

3572 With renttes and reches of the rownde table ;
Has made alle hys retenewys of renayede wrechis,
And devysed my rewme to dyverse lordes,
To sowdeours and to Sarazenes owtte of sere londes !

3576 He has weddyde Waynore, and hyr to wyefe holdes,
And a childe es eschapede, the chaunce es no bettire !
They hafe semblede on the see sevene schore chippis,
ffulle of ferrome folke, to feghte with myne one !

3580 ffor-thy to Bretayne the brode buske us by-hovys,
ffor to brettyne the beryne that has this bale raysede !
Thare salle no freke men fare, bott alle one fresche horses,
That are fraistede in fyghte, and floure of my knyghttez :

They must proceed to Britain at once with all speed.

3584 Sir Howelle and syr Hardolfe here salle be leve,
To be lordes of the ledis that here to me lenges ;
Lokes in-to Lumbardy, that thare no lede chaunge,—
And tendirly to Tuskayne take tente alles I byde ;

Sir Howell and Sir Hardolf are left behind to govern Rome and Italy.

3588 Resaywe the rentis of Rome qwen þay are rekkenede ;
Take sesyne the same daye that laste waste assygnede,
Or elles alle þe ostage withowttyne þe wallys,
Be hynggyde hye appone hyghte alle holly at ones !"

3592 **N**owe bownes the bolde kyng with beste knyghtes,
Gers trome and trusse and trynes forth aftyre ;

Arthur and his best knights journey rapidly towards Britain.

Turnys thorowe Tuskayne, taries bot littille,
Lyghte noghte in Lumbarddye bot whene þe lyghte
failede;

3596 Merkes over the mowntaynes fulle mervaylous wayes,
Ayres thurghe Almaygne evyne at the gayneste;
In Flanders his
fleet is assembled.
fferkes evynne in-to flawndresche with hys ferse
knyghttes;

Within fyftene dayes his flete es assemblede,

3600 And thane he schoupe hyme to chippe, and schownnes
no lengere,

Scherys with a charpe wynde over þe schyre waters;

By þe roche with ropes he rydes one ankkere,

Thare the false mene fletyde, and one flode lengede,

He discovers the
fleet of the enemy
armed and pre-
pared for fight.

3604 With chefe chaynes of chare chokkode to-gedyrs,
Charggede evyne cheke-fulle of chevalrous knyghtes;
And in þe hynter one heghte, helmes and crestes,
Hatches with haythene mene hillyd ware thare undyre,

3608 Prowdliche prutrayede with payntede clothys,
Iche a pece by pece prykyde tyll e oþer,
Dubbyde with dagswaynnes dowblede they seme;
And thus þe derfe Danamarkes had dyghte alle theyre
chippys,

3612 That no dynte of no darte dere them ne schoulde:

Than the roye and þe renkes of the rownde table

Alle ryally in rede arrayes his chippis;

Then he makes
ready his ships
for the battle,

That daye ducheryes he delte, and doubbyde knyghttes,
3616 Dresses dromowndes and dragges, and drawene up e
stonys;

The toppe-castelles he stuffede with toyelys, as hyme
lykyde,

Bendys bowes of vys brothly þare aftyre,

Tolowris tentyly takelle they ryghttene,

3620 Brasene hedys fulle brode buskede one flones,

Graythes for garnysones gomes arrayes;

Gryme gaddes of stele, ghywes of iryne,

Stirttelys steryne one steryne with styffe mene of armes;

- 3624 Mony luffiche launce appone lofte stoundys,
 Ledys one leburde, lordys and oper,
 Pyghte payvese one porte, payntede scheldes,
 One hyndire hurdace one highte helmede knyghtez.
- 3628 Thus they scheftene fore schotys one thas schire strandys,
 Ilke schalke in his schrowde, fullē scheene ware þeire
 wedys.

The bolde kynge es in a barge and a-bowtte rowes,
 Alle bare-hevvede for besye with beveryne lokkes ;

and rows round
 the fleet to see
 that everything
 is prepared.

- 3632 And a beryne with his bronde, and ane helme betyne,
 Mengede with a mawncelet of maylis of silver,
 Compaste with a coronalle, and coverde fullē ryche ;
 Kayris to yche a cogge, to comfurthe his knyghttes :
- 3636 To Clegys and Cleremownde he cryes one lowde,—

He exhorts his
 knights to be of
 good courage,

“O Gawayne! O Galyrane! thies gud mens bodyes.”
 To Loth and to Lyonelle fullē lovefly he melys,
 And to syr Lawncelot de Lake lordliche wordys,—

- 3640 “Lat es covere þe kyth, the coste es owre ownne ;
 And gere theme brotheliche blenke, alle þone blod-hondes!
 Bryttyne them with-in bourde, and brynne theme þare
 aftyre !

Hewe downe hertly þone heythenē tykes !

- 3644 They are harlotes halfe, I hette þow myne honnde !”

Than he coveres his cogge, and caches one ankere,
 Kaughte his comliche helme with þe clere maylis ;
 Buskes baners one brode, betyne of gowles,

goes to his ship,
 and orders the
 anchor to be
 raised.

- 3648 With coronns of clere golde clenliche arraiede ;
 Bot þare was chosene in þe chefe a chalke-white maydene,
 And a childe in hir arme, þat chefe es of hevynne :
 Withowttene changynge in chace, thies ware þe cheefe
 armes

His device is a
 picture of our
 Lady and the
 Child.

- 3652 Of Arthure þe avenaunt, qwhylls he in erthe lengede.
 Thane the marynerse mellys, and maysters of chippis,
 Merily iche a mate menys tille oper ;
 Of theire termys they talke, how þay ware tydd,

The sailors busy
 themselves to get
 the ships under
 weigh

- 3656 Towyne tresselle one trete, trussene upe sailles,

- They sail across
the strait and the
battle begins.
- 3660 Bot bonettez one brede, bettrede hatches ;
Brawndeste browne stele, braggede in trompes ;
Standis styffe one the stamyne, steris one aftyre ;
Strekyne over þe streme, thare stryvyng be-gynnes.
ffro þe wagande wynde owte of þe weste rysses,
Brethly bessomes with byrre in berynes sailles ;
With hir bryngges one burde burliche cogges,
- There is great
dashing together
of ships.
- 3664 Qwhylls þe bilyng and þe beme brestys in sondyre ;
So stowtly þe forsterne one þe stam hyttis,
þat stokkes of þe stere-burde strykkys in peces !
Be thane cogge appone cogge, krayers and oþer,
- Grapplings are
thrown out.
- 3668 Castys crepers one crosse als to þe crafte langes :
Thane was hede-rapys hewene þat helde upe þe mastes ;
Thare was conteke full e kene, and crachynge of chippys !
Grett cogges of kampe crasseches in sondyre !
- A mighty strug-
gle ensues.
- 3672 Mony kabane clevede, cabilles destroyede !
Knyghtes and kene mene killide the braynes !
Kidd castelles were corvene with alle theire kene wapene,
Castelles full comliche, þat coloured ware faire !
- Castles built on
the decks are
thrown down.
- 3676 Upcynes eghelyng þay ochene þare aftyre,
With þe swynge of þe swerde sweys þe mastys ;
Ovyre-fallys in þe firste frekis and othire,
ffrekke in þe forchipe fey es bylevefede !
- Masts fall and kill
the mariners.
- 3680 Than brothely they bekyre with boustouse tacle,
Bruschese boldly one burde, brynyede knyghtes
Owt of botes one burde was buskede with stonys,
Bett downe of þe beste, brystis the hetches ;
- Boardings are
made and hand-
to-hand fights
take place.
- 3684 Som gomys thourghe gyrde with gaddys of yryne,
Comys gayliche clede englaymous wapene !
Archers of Englande full egerly schottes,
Hittis thourghe þe harde stele full hertly dynnttis !
- The archers of
England make
havoc among the
heathen knights.
- 3688 Sonne hotchene in holle the heþenne knyghtes,
Hurte thourghe þe harde stele, hele they never !
Than they falle to þe fyghte, ffoynes with sperys,
Alle the frekkeste one frownte þat to þe fyghte langes ;
- 3692 And ilkone frechely fraystез theire strenghes,

- Were to fyghte in þe flete with theire felle wapyne :
 Thus they dalte þat daye thire dubbide knyghtes,
 Tille alle þe Danes ware dede, and in þe depe throwene ! The Danes of
Modred's fleet
are all slain.
 3696 Than Bretones brothely with brondis they hewene,
 Lepys in up one lofte lordeliche berynes ;
 When ledys of owt londys leppyne in waters,
 Alle oure lordes one lowde laughene at ones !
 3700 Be thane speris whare sprongene, spalddyd chippys,
 Spanyolis spedily sprentyde over burdez ;
 Alle þe kene mene of kampe, knyghtes and oper,
 Killyd are colde dede, and castyne over burdez !
 3704 Theire swyers sweyftly has þe swete levyde,
 Heþene hevande on hache in þer hawe ryses,
 Synkande in þe salte see sevene hundrethe at ones !
 Thane *syr* Gawayne the gude he has þe gree wonnene,
 3708 And alle þe cogges grete he gafe to his knyghtes,
 Sir Geryne, and *syr* Grisswolde, and othir gret lordes ;
 Garte Galuth a gud gome girde of þaire hedys !
 Thus of þe false flete appone þe flode happenede,
 3712 And thus þeis feryne folke fey are belevede !
 ʒitt es þe traytour one londe with tryede knyghttes,
 And alle trompede they trippe one trappede stedys ;
 Schewes theme undir schilde one þe schire bankkes ;
 3716 He ne schownttes for no schame, bot schewes fullæ heghe !
 Sir Arthure and Gawayne avyede theme bothene
 To sixty thosandez of mene, þat in theire fyghte hovede ;
 Be this the folke was fellyde, thane was þe flode passede ;
 3720 Thane was it slyke a slowde in slakkes fullæ hugge,
 That let þe kyng for to lande, and the lawe watyre ;
 ffor-thy he lengede one laye for lesynng of horsesys,
 To loke of his lege mene, and of his lele knyghtes,
 3724 ʒif any ware lamede or loste, life ʒife they scholde.
 Thane *syr* Gawayne þe gude a galaye he takys,
 And glides up at a gole with gud mene of armes ;
 Whene he growndide for grefe, he gyrdys in þe watere,
 3728 That to þe girdylle he gos in allæ his gylte wedys :

Arthur's lords
laugh to see them
leap into the
water.

All Modred's
keen men are
killed.

Sir Gawaine dis-
tributes the ships
among his
knights.

But Modred the
traitor has a land
army of tried
knights.

Arthur's host
wait for the tide
to make before
they land.

Sir Gawaine
wades ashore.

Schottis upe appone þe sonde in syghte of þe lordes,
Sengly *with* hys soppe, my sorowe es the more!

With baners of his bagys beste of his armes,

3732 He braydes up-on the banke in his bryghte wedys;

He byddys his baneoure, "buske þow belyfe

To þone brode batayle that one þone banke hoves;

And I ensure þow sothe I salle þowe sewe aftyre;

3736 Loke þe blenke for no bronde, ne for no bryghte wapyne,

Bot beris downe of þe beste and bryng theme o-dawe!

Bees noghte abayste of theire boste abyde one þe erthe;

þe have my baneres borne in batailles fulle hugge;

3740 We salle felle þone false, þe fende hafe theire saules!

ffightes faste *with* þe frape, þe felde salle be oures;

May I þat traytoure overtake, torfere hyme tyddes,

That this tresone has tymbyrde to my trewe lorde!

3744 Of sicke a engendure fulle littyll joye happyns,

And þat salle in this journee be juggede fulle evene!"

Now they seke over þe sonde þis soppe at þe gayneste,

Sembles one þe sowdeours, and settys theire dyntys;

3748 Thourghe þe scheldys so schene schalkes þey towche,

With schaftes scheveride schorte of þas schene launces;

Derfe dynttys they dalte *with* daggande sperys;

One þe danke of þe dewe many dede lyggys,

3752 Dukes, and dusceperis, and dubbide knyghttys;

The doughttyste of Danemarke undone are for ever!

Thus thas renkes in rewthe rittis theire brenyes,

And rechis of þe richeste unrekene dynttis;

3756 Thare they thronge in the thikke, and thristis to þe erthe

Of the thraeste mene thre hundrethe at ones!

Bot *syr* Gawayne for grefe myghte noghte agayne-stande,

Umbegrippys a spere, and to a gome rynnys,

3760 þat bare of gowles fulle gaye, *with* gowces of sylvere;

He gyrdes hym in at þe gorge *with* his gryme¹ launce,

þat þe growndene glayfe graythes in sondyre!

He bids his
standard-bearer
advance against
Modred's host,
and not fear their
numbers.

He and his little
band charge the
whole army.

They slay three
hundred of the
bravest.

Sir Gawaine kills
the king of Goth-
land.

¹ *grown* erased from the text and *gryme* written in margin.

With þat boystous brayde he bownes hym to dye!

3764 The kyng of Gutlande it was, a gude mane of armes.

Thayre awawwarde than alle voydes þare aftyre,

Alles venqueste verrayely with valyant berynes;

Metis with medilwarde, that Modrede ledys!

The vanguard of the army flies.

3768 Oure mene merkes theme to, as theme myshappenede—

ffor hade *syr* Gawayne hade grace to halde þe grene hille,

He had wirchipe i-wys wonnene for ever!

Bot þane *syr* Gawayne i-wysse, he waytes hym wele

Gawaine rashly advances against the centre, where Modred is with the Montagus and other great lords.

3772 To wreke hyme on this werlaughe, þat þis werre movede;

And merkes to *syr* Modrede amonge alle his beryns,

With the Mownttagus, and oþer gret lordys.

þan *syr* Gawayne was grevede, and with a gret wylle

3776 ffewters a faire spere, and freschely askryes,—

“ffals fosterde foode, the fende have thy bonys!

ffy one the, felone, and thy false werkys!

Thow salle be dede and undone for thy derfe dedys,

Gawaine puts a fresh spear in rest, and assails Modred with reproaches.

3780 Or I salle dy this daye, ȝif destanye worthe!”

Thane his enmye, with oste of owtlawede berynes,

Alle cnangylles abowte oure excellente knyghttez,

That the traytoure be tresone had tryede hym selvene;

The host of the enemy, numbering sixty thousand men, surround Gawaine and his little band.

3784 Dukes of Danemarke he dyghttes fullē sone,

And leders of Lettowe, with legyons inewe,

Umbylappyde oure mene with launcez fullē kene,

Sowdecours and Sarazenes owte of sere landys,

3788 Sixty thosande mene semlyly arrayede,

Sekerly assembles thare one sevenschore knyghtes,

Sodaynly in dischayte by tha salte strandes.

Thane *syr* Gawayne grette with his gray eghene,

3792 ffor grefe of his gud mene that he gyde schulde;

He wyste that thay wondyde ware, and wery foughttene,

Gawaine weeps and laments for the danger of his men.

And what for wondire and woo, alle his witte faylede.

And thane syghande he saide, with sylande terys,—

3796 “We are with Sarazenes be-sett appone sere halves!

I syghe noghte for myselfe, sa helpe oure Lorde;

He comforts
them with pro-
mises of blessings
in Heaven.

Bot for to us supprysede, my sorowe es the more.
Bes dowghtty to-daye, þone dukes schalle be þoures!
3800 ffor dere Dryghttyne this daye dredys no wapyne.

We salle ende this daye alles excellent knyghttes,
Ayere to endelesse joye with angelles unwemmyde.
þose we hafe unwittily wastede oure selfene,

3804 We salle wirke alle wele in þe wirchipe of Cryste.
We salle for þone Sarazenes, I sekire þow my trowhe,
Soupe with oure Saveoure solemply in hevene,
In presence of þat precious prynce of alle oper

They shall sup
with prophets,
patriarchs, and
apostles.

3808 With prophetes, and patriarkes, and apostlys fulle nobille,
Be-fore his freliche face that fourmede us alle!

Perish the base
slave that yields!

þondire to þone þaldsones, he þat þeldes hyme ever,
Qwhylls he es qwykke and in qwerte unquellyde with
handis;

3812 Be he never mo savede, ne socourede with Cryste,
Bot Satanase his sawle mowe synke in-to helle!"

Then Gawaine
grimly grips his
weapon,

Than grymly *syr* Gawayne gryppis hys wapyne,
Agayne þat gret bataille he graythes hym sone;

3816 Radly of his riche swerde he reghttes þe cheynys,
In he schokkes his schelde, schountes he no lengare;
Bot alles unwyse wodewyse he wente at þe gayneste,
Wondis of thas werdirwyns with wrakfufle dynttys,

and rushes into
the fray.

3820 Alle wellys fulle of blode, thare he awaye passes;
And þose hym ware fulle woo, he wondys bot lyttille,
Bot wrekyss at his wirchipe þe wrethe of hys lorde!
He stekys stedis in stoure, and sterenefulle knyghttes,

He performs
mighty deeds of
arms.

3824 That steryne mene in theire sterapes stone dede þay lygge!
He rybys þe ranke stele, he rittes þe mayles;
Thare myghte no renke hym areste, his resone was
passed!

He fights like a
madman.

He felle in a fransye for fersenesse of herte,
3828 He feghttis and fellis downe þat hyme be-fore standis!
felle never fay mane sicke fortune in erthe!
Into þe hale bataile hedlynge he rynnys,
And hurtes of þe hardieste þat one the erthe lenges!

3832 Letande alles a lyone, he lawnches them^e thorowe,
 Lordes and ledars, that one the launde hoves !
 3it *syr* Gawayne for wo wondis bot lyttill,
 Bot woundis of thas wedirwynes with wondirfulle dyntes,

3836 Alls he þat wold wilfully wastene hyme selfene ;
 And for wondrousome and wille alle his wit failede,
 That wode alles a wylde beste he wente at þe gayneste ;
 Alle walewede one blode, thare he awaye passede ;

Like a wild beast
 he goes on wal-
 lowing in blood.

3840 Iche a wy may be-warre, be wreke of anoþer !

Than hemoves to *syr* Modrede amange alle his knyghttes,
 And mett hyme in þe myde schelde, and mallis hyme
 thorowe ;

Bot the schalke for the scharpe he schownttes a littill,

3844 He schare hyme one þe schorte rybbys a schaftmonde
 large !

He wounds Mo-
 dred in the side.

The schafte schoderede and schotte in the schire beryne,
 þat the schadande blode over his schanke rynnys,
 Andschewede one hisschynbawde, þat wassschire burneste !

3848 And so they schyfte and schove, he schotte to þe erthe ;
 With þe lussche of þe launce he lyghte one hys schuldrys,
 Ane akere lenghe one a launde, fullle lothely wondide.

Modred falls to
 the earth.

Than Gawayne gyrde to þe gome, and one þe groffe fallis ;

3852 Alles his grefe was graythede, his grace was no bettyre !
 He schokkes owtte a schorte knyfe schethede with silvere,
 And scholde have slottede hyme in, bot no slytte
 happenede :

Gawaine strives
 to finish him with
 a dagger, but
 misses his blow.

His hand sleppid and slode o-slante one þe mayles,

3856 And þe toþer slely slynges hym undire :

With a trenchande knyfe the traytoure hym hyttes,
 Thorowe þe helme and þe hede, one heyghe one þe brayne :
 And thus *syr* Gawayne es gone, the gude man of armes,

Modred, with a
 sharp dagger,
 stabs Gawaine
 through the
 brain.

3860 With-owttyne rescewe of renke, and rewghe es þe more !

Thus *syr* Gawayne es gone, that gyede many othire ;
 ffor Gowere to Gernesay, alle þe gret lordys
 Of Glamour, of Galys londe, þis galyarde knyghtes,

Gawaine, the
 good man of
 arms, is gone !

3864 ffor glent of gloppynyng glade be they never !

King Frederick
asks who he was.

Kyng ffroderike offres fraythely þare aftyre,
ffraynes at the false mane of owre ferse knyghte;
"Knew thou ever this knyghte in thi kithe ryche,
3868 Of whate kynde he was comene, be-knowe now þe sothe;
Qwat gome was he this with the gaye armes,
With þis gryffoun of golde, þat es one growffe fallyne;
He has grettly greffede us, sa me Gode helpe!

Modred tells
him that he was
Sir Gawaine the
good, the merri-
est, the kindest,
and the bravest
of knights!

3872 Gyrde downe oure gude mene, and grevede us sore!
He was þe sterynneste in stoure that ever stele werryde,
ffore he has stonayede oure stale, and stroyede for ever!"
Than syr Mordrede with mouthe melis fulle faire;
3876 "He was makles one molde, mane be my trowhe;
This was syr Gawayne the gude, þe gladdeste of othire,
And the graciouseste gome that undire God lyffede,
Mane hardyeste of hande, happyeste in armes,
3880 And the hendeste in hawle undire hevene riche;
þe lordelieste of ledyng qwhylls he lyffe myghte,
ffore he was lyone allossede in londes i-newe;
Had thou knawene hym, syr kyng in kythe thare he
lengede,

Modred weeps
for the fate of
Gawaine.

3884 His konyng, his knyghthode, his kyndly werkes,
His doying, his doughtynesse, his dedis of armes,
Thow wolde hafe dole for his dede þe dayes of thy life!"
þit þat traytour alles tite teris lete he falle,
3888 Turnes hym furthe tite, and talkes no more,
Went wepand awaye and weries the stowndys,
þat ever his werdes ware wroghte siche wandrethe to
wyrke:

He repents of his
wickedness and
retreats,

Whene he thoghte on þis thyng, it thirllde his herte;
3892 ffor sake of his sybb blode sygheande he rydys;
When þat renayede renke remembirde hym selvene,
Of reverence and ryotes of þe rownde table.
He rennyd and repent hyme of alle his rewthe werkes,
3896 Rode awaye with his rowte, ristys he no lengere,
ffor rade of oure riche kyng, ryve þat he scholde;
Thane kayres he to Cornewaile, carefulle in herte,

- Because of his kynsemane that one the coste ligges :
 3900 He taries tremlande ay, tydandis to herkene.
 Than the traytoure treunted þe Tyseday þar-aftyre,
 Trynnys in *with* a trayne tresone to wirke,
 And by þe Tambire þat tide his tentis he reris,
 3904 And thane in a mette-while a messangere he sendes,
 And wraite un-to Waynor how the werlde chaungede,
 And what comliche coste the kyng was aryvede,
 One floode foughtene *with* his fleete, and felyd theme
 olyfe ;
 3908 Bade hir ferkenē so ferre, and fllee with hir childire,
 Whills he myghte wile hyme awaye, and wyne to hir
 speche,
 Ayere in-to Irelande, in-to þas owte mowntes,
 And wonne thare in wilderness *with-in* tha wast landys ;
 3912 Than cho þermys and þee at þorke in hir chambire,
 Gronys fullē grysely *with* gretand teres,
 Passes owte of þe palesse *with* alle hir price maydenys,
 Towarde Chestyre in a charre thay chese hir þe wayes,
 3918 Dighte hir ewyne for to dye *with* dule at hir herte ;
 Scho kayres to Karelyone, and kawghte hir a vaile,
 Askes thare þe habite in þe honoure of Criste,
 And alle for falsede, and frawde, and fere of hir loverde !
 3920 **B**ot whene oure wiese kyngē wiste þat Gawayne was
 landede,
 He al to-wrythes for woo, and wryngande his handes,
 Gers lawneche his botes appone a lawe watire,
 Londis als a lyone *with* lordliche knyghtes,
 3924 Slippes in in the sloppes o-slante to þe girdylle,
 Swalters upe swyftly *with* his swerde drawene,
 Bownnys his bataile and baners displayes,
 Buskes *over* þe brode sandes *with* breth at his herte,
 3928 fferkes frekkly one felde þare þe feye lygges ;
 Of the traytours mene one trappede stedis,
 Ten thosandez ware tynte, þe trewghe to acownt,
 And certane on owre syde sevene score knyghtes

goes into Corn-
wall,

and pitches his
camp by the Ta-
mar.

and from thence
writes to Guin-
ever,

bidding her fly
into Ireland.

But she goes to
Caerleon and
takes the veil.

Arthur is grieved
for Gawaine's
rash landing, and
follows him
wading through
the water.

He slays ten
thousand men in
his great wrath.
Seven score of
his knights are
slain.

3932 In soyte *with* there soverayne unsownde are belevede !

Arthur slays
dukes and earls,

The kyng comly *over-kesté* knyghtes and othire,
Erles of Awfrike, and estriche berynes
Of Orgaile and Orekenay, *þe* Iresche kynges,

3936 The nobileste of Norwaye, nowmbirs fullé hugge,
Dukes of Danamarke, and dubbid knyghtes ;
And the enchede kyng in the gay armes

Lys gronande one *þe* grownnde, and girde thorowe evené !

and makes his
way to where Ga-
waine's men are
surrounded,

3940 The riche kyng ransakes with rewthe at his herte,
And up rypes the renkes of alle *þe* rownde tabylle ;
Scs theme alle in a soppe in sowte by theme one,
With *þe* Sarazenes unsownde enserchede abowte ;

and sees Sir Ga-
waine lying dead.

3944 And *syr* Gawayne the gude in his gaye armes,
Umbegrippede the girse, and one grouffe fallene,
His baners braydene downe, betyne of gowlles,
His brand and his brade schelde al bloody be-rovene ;

3948 Was never oure semliche kyng so sorowfulle in herte,
Ne *þat* sanke hyme so sade, bot *þat* sighte one.

With groans and
tears he kisses
the body.

Than gliftis *þe* gud kyng, and glapyns in herte,
Gronys fullé grisely *with* gretande teris ;

3952 Knelis downe to the cors, and kaught it in armes,
Kastys upé his umbrere, and kysses hyme sone !
Lokes one his eye-liddis, *þat* lowkkide ware faire,
His lippis like to *þe* lede, and his lire falowede !

He bitterly la-
ments the good
knight.

3956 *þan* the corownde kyng cryes fullé lowde,—
“Dere kosyne o kynde, in kare am I levede !
ffor nowé my wirchipe es wente, and my were endide !
Here es *þe* hope of my hele, my happyngé of armes !

3960 My herte and my hardynes hale one hym lengede !
My concelle, my comforthe, *þat* kepide myne herte !
Of alle knyghtes *þe* kyng *þat* undir Criste lifede !
þou was worthy to be kyng, thoſe I *þe* corowne bare !

It was through
his wit that all
his conquests
were made.

3964 My wele and my wirchipe of alle *þis* werlde riche
Was wonnene thourghe *syr* Gawayne, and thourghe his
witte one !

Allas !” saide *syr* Arthure, “nowé ekys my sorowe !

I am uttirly undone in myne awene landes !

3968 A doughtouse derfe dede, þou duellis to longe !

Why drawes þou so one dreghe, thow drownnes myne herte !”

Than swetes the swete kyng and in swounne fallis,

Swafres up swiftly, and swetly hym kysses,

3972 Tille his burliche berde was bloody be-rowne,

Alls he had bestes britenede, and broghte owt of life ;

Ne had *syr* Ewayne comene, and othire grete lordys,

His bolde herte had broustene for bale at þat stownde !

3976 “**B**lyve,” sais thies bolde mene ! “thow blondirs þi selfene,

þis es botles bale, for bettir bees it never !

It es no wirchipe i-wysse to wryng thyne hondes,

To wepe als a womane it es no witt holdene !

3980 Be knyghtly of contenaunce, als a kyng scholde,

And leve siche clamoure for Cristes lufe of hevene !”

“ffor blode,” said the bolde kyng, “blyne salle I never,

Or my brayne to-briste, or my breste oþer !

3984 Was never sorowe so softe that sanke to my herte !

Itt es fulle sibb to myselfe, my sorowe es the more !

Was never so sorowfulle a syghte seynewith myne eghene !

He es sakles supprysede for syne of myne one !”

3988 Downe knelis þe kyng, and kryes fulle lowde ;

With carefull contenaunce he karpes thes wordes,—

“O rightwis riche Gode, this rewthe thow be-holde !

þis ryalle rede blode ryne appone erthe ;

3992 It ware worthy to be schrede and schryned in golde,

ffor it es sakles of syne, sa helpe me oure Lorde !”

Downe knelis þe kyng with kare at his herte,

Kaughte it upe kyndly with his clene handis,

3996 Keste it in a ketille-hatte, and coverde it faire,

And kayres furthe with þe cors in kyghte þare he lenges.

“**H**ere I make myn avowe,” *quod* the kyngthane,

“To Messie, and to Marie, the mylde qwene of hevene,

Arthur swoons for grief ; then starts up and kisses the dead knight.

His beard is smeared in the blood of Gawaine.

Sir Ewayne and his knights reproach him.

He excuses himself on account of the greatness of the grief.

He collects Gawaine's blood in a helmet,

and carries away his body.

Then he makes a
solemn vow that
he will take no
pleasure in the
chase till Ga-
waine be
avenged.

- 4000 I salle never ryvaye, ne racches un-cowpylle
At roo ne rayne dere, þat rynnes appon^{ne} erthe ;
Never grewhownde late glyde, ne gossehawke latt flye,
Ne never fowle see fellide, þat fliegthes *with* wenge ;
- 4004 ffawkone ne formaylle appone fiste handille,
Ne þitt *with* gerefawcone rejoyse me in erthe ;
Ne regnne in my royaltez, ne halde my rownde table,
Tille thi dede, my dere, be dewly revengede !
- 4008 Bot ever droupe and dare, qwyll^{es} my lyfe lastez,
Tille Drightene and derfe dede hafe done qwate theme
likes !”

The body was
sent straight to
Winchester,

and met by a pro-
cession of monks.

Arthur gives or-
ders that all hon-
our should be
paid to the dead.

- Than kaughte they upe þe cors *with* kare at theire hertes,
Karyed [it] one a coursere *with* þe kynge selfene ;
- 4012 The waye unto Wynchestre þay wente at the gayneste,
Wery and wandsomdly, *with* wondide knyghtes ;
Thare come þe prior of the plas, and professide monnkes,
Apas in processione, and *with* the prynce metys ;
- 4016 And he be-tuke þame the cors of þe knyghte noble,—
“ Lokis it be clenly kepyd,” he said, “ and in þe kirke
holdene,
Done for derygese, as to þe ded fallys ;
Menskede *with* messes, for mede of þe saule :
- 4020 Loke it wante no waxe, ne no wirchipe elles,
And at þe body be bawmede, and one erthe holdene.
þiff thou kepe thi covent, encroche any wirchipe
At my comyng agayne, þif Crist wille it thole ;
- 4024 Abyde of þe beryenge tille they be broughte undire,
þat has wroghte us this woo, and þis werre movede.”
- Than sais *syr* Wywhere þe wy, a wyese mane of armes,
“ I rede þe warely wende, and wirkes the beste ;
- 4028 Soiorne in this cete, and semble thi berynes,
And bidde *with* thi bolde mene in thi burgh^e riche :
Get owt knyghttez of contres, that castelles holdes,
And owt of garysons grete gude mene of armes,
- 4032 ffor we are faithely to fewe to feghte *with* them alle,
þat we see in his sorte appone þe see bankes.”

Sir Wycher ad-
vises that he
should stay in
Winchester and
rally his forces.

With krewelle contenance thane the kyng karpis theis
wordes,—

“I praye the kare noghte, *syr* knyghte, ne caste þou no
dredis!

4036 Hadde I no segge bot myselve one undir sone,
And I may hym see *with* sighte, or one hym sette hondis,
I salle evene amange his mene malle hym to dede,
Are I of þe stede styre halfe a stede lenghe!

Arthur declares
that he himself
alone is sufficient.

4040 I salle hym in his stowre, and stroye hyme for ever,
And þare-to make I myne avowe devottly to Cryste,
And to his modyre Marie, þe mylde qwene of hevene!
I salle never sojourne sounde, ne sawghte at myne herte,

He will never
sojourn in city
or town till Mo-
dred be slain.

4044 In ceté ne in subarbe sette appone erthe,
Ne þitt slomyre ne slepe *with* my slawe eyghne,
Tille he be slayne þat hym slowghe, þif any sleyghte
happene:

Bot ever pursue the Payganys þat my pople distroyede,

4048 Qwyllas I may pare theme and pynne, in place þare me
likes.”

Thare durste no renke hym areste of alle þe rownde table,
Ne none paye þat prynce *with* plesande wordes,
Ne none of his lige-mene luke hym in the eyghne,

None dares to
oppose the fierce
words of Arthur.

4052 So lordely he lukes for losse of his knyghttes!
Thane drawes he to Dorsett, and dreches no langere,
Derefullé dredlesse with drowppande teris;
Kayeris in-to Kornewayle with kare at his herte,

4056 The trays of þe traytoure he trynys fullé evenne:
And turnys in be þe Treynthe¹ þe traytoure to seche,
ffyndis hym in a foreste þe Frydaye there aftire;
The kyng lyghttes one fott, and freschely askryes,

Arthur follows
Modred into
Cornwall and at-
tacks him.

4060 And *with* his freliche folke he has þe folde nomene!

Now isschewis his enmye undire þe wode cynys,
With osten of alynes fullé horrebille to schewe!
Sir Mordrede the malebranche, *with* his myche pople,

A vast host of
aliens assault Ar-
thur's men.

4064 ffoundes owt of the foreste appone fele halves,

¹ ? Tamar.

- There were sixty thousand against
eighteen hundred.
- Arthur on a charger arranges
his men.
- He beseeches them to do well
that day and not to fear.
- If they are slain they will be taken
straight up to Heaven.
- In sevene grett batailles semliche arrayede,
Sexty thowsande mene, the syghte was fullē hugge,
Alle fyghtande folke of þe ferre laundes,
4068 ffaire fettede one frownte be tha fresche strondes!
And alle Arthurs oste was amede with knyghtes
Bot awghtene hundrethe of alle, entrede in rolles;
This was a mache un-mete, bot myghttis of Criste,
4072 To melle with þat multitude in pase man londis.
Than the royalle roy of þe rownde table
Rydes one a riche stedes, arrayes his beryns,
Buskes his avawmwarde, als hym beste likes;
4076 Syr Ewayne, and syr Errake, and othire gret lordes,
Demenys the medilwarde menskefully thare aftyre,
With Merrake and Menyduke, myghty of strenghes;
Idirous and Alymere, þire avenaunt childrene,
4080 Ayers with Arthure, with sevene score of knyghtes;
He rewlis þe rerewarde redyly thare aftyre,
The rekeneste redy mene of þe rownde table,
And thus he fittis his folke, and freschely askryes,
4084 And syene comforthes his mene with knyghtlyche
wordes—
“I beseke þow, sirs, for sake of oure Lorde,
That þe doo wele to daye, and dredis no wapene!
ffighttes fersely nowē, and fendis þoure selvene,
4088 ffellis downe þone feye folke, the felde salle be owrs!
They are Sarazenes þone sorte, un-sownde motte they
worthe!
Sett one theme sadlye, for sake of oure Lorde!
þif us be destaynede to dy to daye one this erthe,
4092 We salle be hewede un-to hevene, or we be halfe colde!
Loke þe lett for no lede lordly to wirche;
Layes þone laddes lowe be the layke ende!
Take no tente un-to me, ne tale of me rekke,
4096 Bes besy one my baners with þoure brighte wapyns,
That they be strengthely stuffede with steryne knyghtes,
And holdenē lordly one lofte ledys to schewe;

ȝif any renke theme arase, reschowe theme sone.

- 4100 Wirkes now my wirchipe, to daye my werre endys!
ȝe wotte my wele and my wo, wirkkys as ȝow likys!
Crist comly with crowne comforte ȝow alle,
ffor þe kyndeste creatours that ever kyñge ledde!

To-day his war
ends!

- 4104 I gyffe ȝow alle my blyssyng with a blithe wille,
And alle Bretowns bolde, blythe mote ȝe worthe!"
They pype upe at pryme tyme approches theme nere,
Pris mene and priste proves their strengthes;

He gives them
his parting bless-
ing.

- 4108 Bremly the brethemen bragges in troumppes,
In cornettes comlyly, whene knyghttes assembles,
And thane jolyly enjoynys þeis jentylle knyghttes;
A jolyere journé a-juggede was never,

- 4112 Whene Bretones boldly embraces their scheldes,
And cristyne encroyssede theme, and castis in fewtire!

The Britons fight
furiously.

Than *syr* Arthure oste his enmye askryes,
And in they schokke their scheldes, schontes no
lengare;

- 4116 Schotte to þe schiltroncs, and schowttes fullé heghe,
Thorowe scheldis fullé schene schalkes they touche!
Redily thas rydde mene of the rownde table
With ryalle raunke stele rittys their mayles;
4120 Bryneys browddene they briste, and burneste helmys,
Hewes haythene mene downe, halses in sondre!
ffyghtande with fyne stele, þe feye blod rynnys
Of þe frekkeste of frounte, unfers ere be-levede.

- 4124 Ethyns of Argayle and Irische kynges
Enverounes oure awawnwarde with venymmos beryns;
Peghttes and paynymes with perilous wapyns,
With speres disspetously disspoylles our knyghttes,

The vanguard is
surrounded by
the enemy, and
many of them
slain.

- 4128 And hewede downe the hendeste with hertly dynttys!
Thorow the holle batayle they holdene their wayes;
þus fersly they fyghte appone sere halves,
That of þe bolde Bretones myche blode spillis!

- 4132 Thare durste non rescowe theme, for reches in erthe,
þe steryne ware þare so stedde, and stuffede wit othire:

He durste noghte stire a steppe, bot stodde for hyme
selvene,

Tille thre stalis ware stroyede be strenghe of hyme one!

4136 "Idrous," *quod* Arthure, "ayre the byhoves!

Arthur bids Sir
Idrus rescue his
father, Sir
Ewaine.

I see *syr* Ewayne over-sette with Sarazenes kene!

Redy the for rescows, arraye thee sone!

Hye þe with hardy mene in helpe of thy ffadire!

4140 Sett in one the syde, and socoure þone lordes;

Bot they be socourrede and sownde, unsawghte be I
never!"

Idrous hyme ansuers earnestly þare aftyre,—

"He es my fadire in faithe, for-sake salle I never!

Sir Idrus replies
that he owes all
duty to his fa-
ther, and that he
had commanded
him not to leave
the king.

4144 He has me fosterde and fedde, and my faire bretherene,

Bot I for-sake this gate, so me Gode helpe,

And sothely alle sybredyne bot thyselfe one;

I breke never his biddynge for beryne one lyfe,

4148 Bot ever bouxome as beste blethely to wyrke!

He commande me kyndly, with knyghtly wordes,

That I schulde lelely one þe lenge, and one noo lede elles;

I salle hys commandement holde, þif Criste wil me thole!

4152 He es eldare than I, and ende salle we bothene;

He salle ferkke be-fore, and I salle come aftyre:

þiffe hyme be destaynede to dy to daye one þis erthe,

Criste comly with crowne take kepe to hys saule!"

4156 **T**han remys the riche kynge with rewthe at his herte,
Hewys hys handys on heghte, and to þe hevene lokes,—

Arthur wishes
that he might die
instead of his
knights.

"Qwythene had Dryghttyn destaynede at his dere wille,

þat he hade demyd me to daye to dy for þow alle,

4160 That had I lever than be lorde alle my lyfe tyme,

Off alle þat Alexandere aughte qwhilles he in erthe
lengede."

Sir Ewaine and
Sir Errard per-
form great deeds
of valour before
they are over-
powered and
slain.

Sir Ewayne and *syr* Errake, þes excellent beryns,

Enters in one þe oste, and egerly strykes;

4164 The ethenys of Orkkenaye and Irische kynges,

pay gobone of þe gretteste with growndone swerdes,

Hewes one þas hulkes with þeire harde wapyns,

- Layed downe þas ledes with lothely dynttys ;
 4168 Schuldirs and scheldys þay schrede to þe hawnches,
 And medilles thourghe mayles, þay merkene in sondire !
 Sicke honoure never aughte none erthely kyng
 At theire endyng daye, bot Arthure hyme selvene !
 4172 So þe droughte of þe daye dryede theire hertes,
 That bothe drynkles they dye, dole was þe more !
 Now mellys oure medille-warde, and mengene to-gedire. The centre of Ar-
 thur's army en-
 gages.
 Sir Mordrede þe Malebranche with his myche pople,
 4176 He had hide hyme be-hynde with-in thas holte eynys,
 With halle bataile one hethe, harme es þe more !
 He hade sene þe conteke al clene to þe ende,
 How oure chevalrye chevyde be chaunces of armes !
 4180 He wiste oure folke was for-foughttene, þat þare was
 feye levede ;
 To encowntere þe kyng he castes hyme sone,
 Bot the churles chekyne hade chaungyde his armes ;
 He had sothely for-sakene þe sawturore engrelede,
 4184 And laughte up thre lyons alle of whitte silvyre,
 Passande in purple of perrie fullæ ryche,
 ffor þe kyng sulde noghte knawe þe cawtelous wriche !
 Because of his cowardys he keste of his atyre ;
 4188 Bot the comliche kyng knewe hym fullæ swythe,
 Karpis to syr Cadors þes kyndly wordez,—
 “I see the traytoure come þondyr trynande fullæ þerne ;
 þone ladde with þe lyones es like to hyme-selfene !
 4192 Hym salla torfere betyde, may I touche ones,
 ffor alle his tresone and trayne, alles I am trew lorde !
 To day Clarente and Caliburne salla kythe theme to-gedirs, The two famous
 swords, Clarent
 and Caliburn,
 shall this day be
 tried one against
 the other.
 Whilke es kenere of kerse, or hardare of eghge !
 4196 ffraiste salla we fyne stele appone fyne wedis :
 Itt was my derlyngæ dayntevous, and fullæ dere holdene,
 Kepede fore encorownmentes of kynges enoyntted
 One dayes when I dubbyde dukkes and erlles ;
 4200 It was burliche borne be þe bryghte hiltes ;
 I durste never dere it in dedis of armes,

Arthur recognises his sword which he had left at Wallingford under the care of the Queen.

- Bot ever kepide clene, be-cause of myselvene;
 ffor I see Clarent unclede, þat crowne es of swerdes :
 4204 My wardrop of Walyngfordhe I wate es distroyede;
 Wist no wy of wone bot Waynor hir-selvene,
 Scho hade þe kepynge hirselfe of þat kydde wapyne,
 Off cofres enclosede þat to þe crowne lengede,
 4208 With rynges and relikkes, and þe regale of ffraunce,
 That was fflowndene one *syr* ffrolle, whene he was feye
 levyde."

Sir Merrick fights with Modred and is forced to withdraw.

- Than *syr* Marrike in malyncoly metys hyme sone,
 With a mellyd mace myghtyly hym strykes;
 4212 The bordoure of his bacenett he bristes in sondire,
 þat þe schire rede blode over his brene rynnys!
 The beryne blenkes for bale, and alle his ble chaunges,
 Bot þitt he byddys as a bore, and brymly he strykes!
 4216 He braydes owte a brande bryghte als ever ony sylver,
 þat was *syr* Arthure awene, and Utere his fadirs,
 In þe wardrop of Walyngfordhe was wonte to be kepede;
 þare with þe derfe dogge syche dynttes he rechede,
 4220 þe toþer with-drewe one-dreghe and durste do none oper!
 ffor *syr* Marrake was mane merrede in elde,
 And *syr* Mordrede was myghty, and his moste strenghes;
 Come none with-in the compas, knyghte ne none oper,
 4224 With-in þe swyng of swerde, þat ne he þe swete levyd:
 þat persayfes oure prynce, and presses to faste,
 Strykes into þe stowre by strenghe of hys handis;
 Metis with *syr* Mordrede, he melis unfaire,—

Arthur forces his way to Modred,

and upbraids him.

Then he strikes him with Caliburn and cuts through his shield and into the shoulder.

- 4228 "Turne, traytoure untrew, þe tydys no bettyre;
 Be gret Gode thow salle dy with dynt of my handys!
 The schalle rescowe no renke ne reches in erthe!"
 The kyng with Calaburne knyghtly hym strykes,
 4232 The cantelle of þe clere schelde he kerfes in sondyre,
 In-to þe schuldyre of þe schalke a schaftmonde large,
 þat þe schire rede blode schewede one þe maylys!
 He schodirde and schrenkys, and schontes bott lyttile,
 4236 Bott schokkes in scharpely in his schene wedys;

The felonne *with þe ffyne swerde freschely* he strykes,
 The ffelettes of *þe fferrere syde* he flassches in sondyre,
 Thorowe jopowne and jesserawnte of gentille mailes!

Modred, though wounded, strikes Arthur and gives him a terrible wound in the side.

4240 The freke fichede in *þe flesche an halfe fotte large*,
 That derfe dynt was his dede, and dole was *þe more*
 That ever þat doughtty sulde dy, bot at Dryghttyns
 wyll!

þitt *with Calyburne* his swerde, fulle knyghttly he
 strykes,

Arthur with Caliburn cuts off the sword-hand of Modred.

4244 Kastes in his clere schelde, and coveres hym fulle faire;
 Swappes of *þe swerde hande*, als he by glenttis,
 Ane inche fro *þe elbowe*, he ochede it in sondyre,
 þat he swounnes one *þe swrathe*, and one swym fallis;

4248 Thorowe brater of browne stele, and the bryghte mayles,
 That the hilde and *þe hande* appone *þe hethe* ligges!
 Thane frescheliche *þe freke* the ffente upe rererys,
 Brochis hym in with the bronde to *þe bryghte hiltys*,

Modred dies.

4252 And he brawles one the bronde, and bownes to dye.
 “In faye,” says *þe feye kynge*, “sore me for-thynkkes
 That ever siche a false theefe so faire an end haves.”
 Qwene they had ffenyste *þis feghte*, thane was *þe felde*
 wonnene,

Arthur declares that his end is too good for him.

4256 And the false folke in *þe felde feye* are by-levede!
 Tille a fforeste they fledde, and felle in the grevys,
 And fers foghtande folke folowes theme aftyre;
 Howntes and hewes downe the heythene tykes,

Modred's men are defeated and pursued.

4260 Mourtherys in the mowntaygnes *syr Mordrede* knyghtes;
 Thare chapyde never no childe, cheftayne ne oþer,
 Bot choppes theme downe in the chace, it chargys bot
 littylle!

4264 **B**ot whene *syr Arthure* anone *syr Ewayne* he fyndys,
 And Errake *þe avenaunt*, and oþer grett lordes,
 He kawghte up *syr Cadour* with care at his herte,
 Sir Clegis, *syr Cleremonde*, þes clere mene of armes,
 Sir Lothe, and *syr Lyonelle*, *syr Lawncelott* and Lowes,

Arthur finds the dead bodies of his knights.

4268 Marrake and Meneduke, þat myghty ware ever;

With langoure in the launde thare he layes theme to-
gedire,

Lokede one theyre lighames, and *with* a lowde stevene,
Alles lede þat liste noghte lyfe and loste had his myrthis;

He swoons for 4272 Than he stotays for made, and alle his strenghe faylez,
sorrow,
Lokes upe to þe lyfte, and alle his lyre chaunges!
Downne he sweys fulle swythe, and in a swoune fallys!

and bitterly 4276 "Kyng comly *with* crowne, in care am I levyde!
grieves over his
knights.
Alle my lordchipe lawe in lande es layde undyre!

That me has gyfene gwerdone, be grace of hym selvene,
Mayntenye my manhede be myghte of theire handes,

4280 Made me manly one molde, and mayster in erthe;
In a tenefulle tyme this torfere was rereryde,
That for a traytoure has tynte alle my trewe lordys!
Here rystys the riche blude of the rownde table,

4284 Rebukkede *with* a rebawde, and rewthe es the more!

I may helpes one hethe house be myne one,
Alles a wafulle wedowe þat wanttes hir beryne!
I may werye and wepe, and wrynge myne handys,

4288 ffor my wytt and my wyrchipe awaye es for ever!

All his joy is 4292 Off alle lordchips I take leve to myne ende!
ended, and he
would take leave
of life.
Here es þe Bretones blode broughte owt of lyfe,
And nowe in þis journee alle my joy endys!"

4292 Thane relyes þe renkes of alle þe rownde table,

The remnants of
his men rally
round him.

To þe ryalle roy thay ride þam alle;
Than assembles fulle sone sevene score knyghtes,
In sighte to þaire soverayne, þat was unsownde levede;

4296 Than knelis the crowned kyng, and kryes one lowde,—

He thanks God 4296 "I thanke þe, Gode, of thy grace, *with* a gud wyll;
for the victory,
and all the glory
which he and his
knights had won.
That gaf us vertue and witt to vencows þis beryns;
And us has grauntede þe gree of theis gret lordes!

4300 He sent us never no schame, ne schenchipe in erthe,
Bot ever ȝit þe overhande of alle oþer kynges:

We hafe no laysere now þese lordys to seke,
ffor ȝone laythely ladde me lamede so sore!

- 4304 Graythe us to Glaschenbery, us gaynes none oþer ;
 Thare we may ryste us with roo, and raunsake oure wondys
 Of þis dere day werke, þe Dryghttene belovede,
 That us has destaynede and demyd to dye in oure awene.”
- 4308 Thane they holde at his heste hally at ones,
 And graythes to Glasschenberye þe gate at þe gayneste ;
 Entres þe Ile of Aveloyne, and Arthure he lyghttes,
 Merkes to a manere there, for myghte he no forthire :
- 4312 A surgyne of Salerne enserches his wondes,
 The kyng sees be asaye þat sownde bese he never,
 And sone to his sekire mene he said theis wordes,—
 “Doo calle me a confessour, with Criste in his armes ;
- 4316 I wille be howselde in haste, whate happe so be-tyddys ;
 Constantyne my cosyne he salle the corowne bere,
 Alles be-commys hym of kynde, ȝife Criste wille hym thole !
 Beryne, fore my benyson, thowe berye ȝone lordys,
- 4320 That in baytaille with brondez are broghte owte of lyfe ;
 And sythene merke manly to Mordrede childrene,
 That they bee sleyghely slayne, and slongene in watyrs ;
 Latt no wykkyde wede waxe, ne wrythe one this erthe
- 4324 I warne fore thy wirchipe, wirke alles I bydde !
 I foregyffe alle greffe, for Cristez lufe of hevene !
 ȝife Waynor hafe wele wroghte, wele hir be-tydde !”
 He saide *In manus* with mayne one molde whare he ligges,
- 4328 And thus passes his speryt, and spekes he no more !
 The baronage of Bretayne thane, bechopes and othire,
 Graythes theme to Glaschenbery with gloppynnande
 hertes,
 To bery thare the bolde kynge, and brynge to the erthe,
- 4332 With alle wirchipe and welthe þat any wy scholde.
 Throly belles thay rynge, and *Requiem* syngys,
 Dosse messes and matyns with mournande notes :
 Relygeous reveste in their riche copes,
- 4336 Pontyficalles and prelates in precyouse wedys,
 Dukes and dusszeperis in their dule cotes,
 Cowntasses knelande and claspande their handes,

He desires to be taken to Glastonbury.

He enters the Isle of Avelon and is taken to a manor there; for he could go no further. A surgeon is sent for,

but Arthur desires a Confessor.

He appoints Constantyne, his cousin, his heir.

Orders Modred's children to be slain.

To Guinever he wishes that “if she has well done she may fare well.” Then he says “*In Manus*,” and his spirit passes away.

The Barons of Britain bury Arthur at Glastonbury.

Great mourning was made at his funeral.

Ladys languessande and lowrande to schewe;
 4340 Alle was buskede in blake, birdes and othire,
 That schewede at the sepulture, *with* sylande teris;
 Whas never so sorrowfulle a syghte seene in their tyme!

This was the end
 of Arthur of the
 blood of Hector
 and of Priamus
 of Troy.

Thus endis kyng Arthure, as auctors alegges,
 4344 That was of Ectores blude the kynge sone of Troye,
 And of *syr* Pryamous the prynce praysede in erthe;
 ffro thythene broghte the Bretons alle his bolde eldyrs
 In-to Bretayne the brode, as *þe* Bruytte tellys.
 Etc. explicit.

Hic jacet Arthurus, rex quondam rexque futurus.

Vere endes Morte Arthure, writene by Robert of Thorntone.

R. Thorntton dictus qui scripsit sit benedictus. Amen!

GLOSSARIAL INDEX.

Aleche, *adv.* alike, 194.
 Alet, *s.* small plate of steel, 2565.
 Alfyne, *s.* elfish creature, 1343.
 Allblawsters, *s.* shooters with cross-bows, 2426.
 Ake, *s.* oak, 1096.
 Allossede or alofede, *adj.* praised, famous, renowned, 2418, 3882.
 Alkyne, *adj.* all kinds of, 928.
 Alowes, *v.* praises, 396; alowede, glorified.
 Als, alls, or alles, *adv.* as, 845, etc.; als-swythe, immediately, 409. See Glossary to *Alliterative Poems*.
 Amede, *v.* estimated, accounted, reckoned, 4069.
 Anetis or anentis, *adv.* near, close to, 2568.
 Anlace, *s.* dagger, 1143.
 Apas, *adv.* walking in slow step, 4015.
 Apperte (= a party, 212), separate or separately, apart, 688.
 Arase or arace, *v.* tear away by force, 4099.
 Aroumede, *v.* enlarged, 340.
 Aryesede, *v.* summoned, 600.
 Assaye, *v.* try, 2347.
 Ascryez, *v.* shouts, 1367.

At, *pron.* that, 1842.
 Atheliste, *adj.* most noble, 1593.
 Attamede, *v.* reached, 2175.
 Auntyre, *v.* adventure, dare, 360.
 Auntyre or awnter, *s.* adventure, 2007.
 Avenaunt, *adj.* noble, becoming, 2627; 'Arthur the avenaunt,' 3652.
 Aventaile, *s.* the vent, or moveable part of the helmet, 910.
 Avires, *v.* directs, 3165.
 Aveyde, *v.* took the way, 3717.
 Avyssely, *adv.* carefully, 2700.
 Awke, *adj.* bold, 13.
 Awkewarde, *adv.* badly, 2564; aside, 2247.
 Ayele, *s.* grandfather, 2604.
 Ayere, *v.* to go or be upon an expedition or business, 455, 617, 620, 1259.
 Aythere, *adj.* either, each, 939.
 Aȝayne-stonde, *v.* oppose, 3127.
 Baite, *v.* feed, 2695, 2672.
 Baiste, *adj.* abashed, frightened, 2857.
 Baltyrde, *v.* capered, danced, 782.
 Barehevydys, *s.* boars' heads, 177.
 Barowes, *s.* porket-pigs, 191.

- Bedgatt, bedfellow (?); byddez, are (?), 1030.
- Bekez, *v.* warms, bakes, 1048.
- Bekennyde or bekende, *v.* commended, entrusted, 482, 2340, 2355.
- Bekyne, *s.* beacon, 564.
- Bekyrs or bekens, *v.* skirmishes, attacks, 368, 2425, 2096.
- Belde, *v.* rest in safety, 8.
- Beneyde, *v.* brought, 2424.
- Bente, *s.* plain or level ground, place, spot, 1054, 1067.
- Bernake, *s.* wild goose, 189.
- Bernes, biernes, byernes, berynes, *s.* men, knights, 255, etc.
- Bes, bees, thou shalt be, 1688; *imp.* be, 2857.
- Bessomes, *s.* tides (?), 3662.
- Bestaile, *s.* beasts, 1050.
- Besye, *s.* press of business, 3631.
- Beteche, *v.* deliver up, 1611.
- Betyne, *adj.* adorned; 'betyne of gowlls,' decked in red armour, 3647, 3946.
- Beveryne, *adv.* flowing, wavy, loose, 3631.
- Bewschers, *s.* buttocks, 1047.
- Blasons, *s.* surcoats, 1860.
- Ble or blee, *s.* colour, complexion, 2576, 3333, 3559.
- Blemeste, *v.* blemished, wounded, 2578.
- Blendez, *v.* blinds, or is blinded, 1799.
- Blenke, *v.* wince, 3641; lessen, 2858.
- Bleryde, *v.* mocked, insulted, 782.
- Blonders, *v.* blunders, go along blindly, 3976.
- Blonke, *s.* steed, horse, 453.
- Blyne, *v.* stop, hesitate, cease, 1931, 2578.
- Blysche, *v.* look, stare, 116. See Glossary of *Allit. Poems*, s.v. *blusch*.
- Bonettez, *s.* small sails, 3657.
- Bot, *adv.* except, unless, 356.
- Botelesse or butelesse, *adj.* bootless, undefended, without remedy, 981, 1014.
- Botures, *s.* butter-sauce (O.Fr.), 189.
- Bownne or boun, *adv.* readily, 1633.
- Bownes, *v.* hastens, 2697.
- Bourdez, *v.* jokes, sports, 1170, 3123.
- Bowes, *s.* limbs, legs, hams, 188.
- Brankand, *v.* wounding, 1861.
- Braggene, *v.* blow, sound, 1484.
- Brater, *s.* vambrace, 4248.
- Brathelle, *s.* brisket, 793.
- Brathely, *adv.* quickly, 3220.
- Braunchers, *s.* young hawks, 190.
- Brayd, *v.* unsheath, draw out, 1172.
- Brayde, *s.* stroke, 3763.
- Brayedez, *v.* dash, rush quickly, 3126.
- Brede, *adj.* broad, 1224.
- Brede, *s.* breads=meats, 1049.
- Breklesse, *adj.* breckless, naked, 1048.
- Bremly or brymly, *adv.* furiously, 117, 4108.
- Brene or breny, *s.* cuirass, body armour, 1413, 1374, 1482, 1525, 1858.
- Brenyede, *adj.* armed, 316.
- Breth or broth, *s.* rage, anger, 107, 117, 214.
- Brochede, *v.* spitted, 1050.

- Brochez, *s.* spits, 1029.
 Brochez, *v.* spurs, 918, 1449.
 Brothely, brathely, or brethly, *adv.*
 angrily, fiercely, 1408, 3641,
 1753.
 Brothy, *adj.* shaggy, stiff, 1090.
 Browdene, *adj.* broad, 1858.
 Brustils, *s.* bristles, 1095.
 Brynne, *v.* brain, dash out their
 brains, 3642.
 Bryttyne or brittene, *v.* cut or tear
 in pieces, 106, 802, 963, 1067.
 Bugande, *v.* reclining, lounging,
 1045.
 Bus, *v.* behoves, 1045.
 Buscayle, *s.* copse, wood, 895, 1634.
 Bustous, *adj.* boisterous, rough,
 strong, 615, 783.
 Byggly, *adv.* proudly, grandly,
 1376.
 Byhowys, *adv.* to advantage, 1715.
 Byrdez, *s.* ladies, 999.
 Byrre, *s.* noise, rush, 3662.
 Byswenkez, *v.* recovers himself,
 1128.
 Caffé, *s.* chaff, refuse, 1064.
 Cantelle, *s.* corner, 4232.
 Caremane, *s.* carl-man, man, 957.
 Carffes, *s.* cuts, 2714.
 Carpe, *v.* speak, 143, 220, etc.
 Chapes, *s.* fastenings, 2522.
 Chare, *v.* turn, 1886.
 Cheekke, *s.* invading force, 1986.
 Chele, *s.* chill, cold, 3392.
 Chese, *perf.* chis, *v.* choose, select,
 take the way, hence go, 1619.
 Cheveride, *v.* shivered, 3392.
 Chewyse, *v.* defend, 1750.
 Chokefulle, quite full, 1552.
 Chullede, *v.* chased, 1444.
 Cleverande, *v.* scaling, climbing,
 3325.
 Clekes or clekys, *v.* clutches, 1164,
 1865.
 Clergyally, *adv.* skilfully, 200.
 Clewes or cloughes, *s.* rocks, 941,
 1639.
 Clewide, *v.* fastened, 3269.
 Close, *s.* defile, gorge, 1639.
 Clowez, *s.* claws, talons, 783.
 Cogge, *s.* boat, vessel, 476.
 Comone, *v.* trade, chaffer, deal,
 1580.
 Condethes, *s.* conduits, 201.
 Connyngez, *s.* rabbits, 197.
 Corenalle, *s.* head-dress, 3259.
 Corkes, *s.* bristles, 1091.
 Corne-bote, *s.* retaliation, full re-
 compense, 1786, 1837.
 Corsaunt, *s.* saint, 1164.
 Coseri, *s.* dealing, arrangement,
 1582.
 Cotte, *s.* coat, 1194.
 Coutere, *s.* the piece of armour
 which protected the elbow, 2567.
 Couthe (of), *adj.* famous for, 21.
 Covaunde, *adj.* careful, 558.
 Coverde, *v.* recovered, 28.
 Cowle-fulle (*lit.* basket-full), brim-
 ful of, 1051.
 Cowntere, *s.* clerk, man of words,
 1672.
 Cowpez, *v.* cuts, divides, 799.
 Crayers, *s.* small ships, 738.
 Cresmede, *adj.* christened, 1065.
 Cretoyne, *s.* a sweet sauce, 197.
 Cruel, *adj.* express, strong, clear,
 ‘cruel wordes,’ 88, etc.
 Cundyde, *adj.* enamelled, 765.
 Dagges, *v.* pierces, 2102, 3750.

- Dagswaynes, *s.* rough coverlets, 3610.
- Danke, *s.* moisture, 3751.
- Dares, *v.* trembles, 3226, 4008.
- Darielles or darioles, curries, 199.
(*Lib. Cure Cocorum*, p. 38.)
- Dawez, *s.* days; 'done of dawez,' taken from day, killed, 2056.
- Deesse, *s.* daïs, raised part of the hall, 218.
- Deffuse, want, scarceness, 256.
- Dere, *v.* hurt, injure, 2099, 3249.
- Derfe, *adj.* strong, powerful, fierce, 312, 811, 2052, 2653.
- Derflyche, *adv.* dreadfully, strongly, 3278.
- Derygese, *s.* dirges, 4018.
- Dictour, *s.* guardian, 712.
- Dischayte, *s.* ambush, 3790.
- Disspite, *s.* anger, 3164.
- Downkyng, *s.* moisture, 3249.
- Drecchede, *v.* delayed, 754, abode, dwelt, 1264.
- Dredleȝ, *adv.* certes, assuredly, 1504.
- Dreghe, *s.* length, delay, 2916, 3277; 'one-dreghe,' behind.
- Dreghe, *v.* suffer, 3438.
- Dreghely, *adv.* carefully, cautiously, 2028.
- Dromowndes, *s.* vessels of war, 3616.
- Droupe, *v.* sorrow, 4008.
- Drye, or dree, *v.* endure, suffer, 704, 1546.
- Dryfande, *v.* driving, 761.
- Drynchene or drenchene, *v.* destroy, 761, 816.
- Dryssede, *v.* directed, ruled, 46.
- Dule, *s.* sorrow, 256.
- Duspere or duchpere, *s.* (douze-pairs), nobles, peers, 66.
- Duttez, *s.* (probably an error for *duntez*, dints, blows) 787.
- Dyspens, *s.* expense, 538.
- Eghelynge, *adv.* edge-wise, 3676.
- Ekkene, *v.* eke, increase, 2009.
- Elagere, *s.* strength, 2978.
- Eldes, *s.* ages, times, 301.
- Elfaydes, *s.* elks? 'some kind of animal' (Halliwell), 2288.
- Eme, *s.* uncle, 1347.
- Enchede, *adj.* fallen, vanquished, 3938.
- Encroche, *v.* obtain possession of, 3213.
- Endordid, *v.* gilded, made to shine, 199.
- "Endore it with yokes of eggs."
—(*Lib. Cure Cocorum*, p. 37).
- Englaymez, *v.* makes slimy or slippery, 1131.
- Englaymous, *adj.* covered with slime, sore, envenomed, 3685.
- Engowschede, *adj.* swelled, puffed up, 2053.
- Engyste, *v.* constrain, 445.
- Enkerly, *adv.* eagerly, 507.
- Empayrede or enpayrede, *v.* impaired, diminished, 474.
- Entamede, *adj.* cut, torn, 1160.
- Enveryde, *adj.* inversed, 1694.
- Erne, ears, 1086.
- Escheffe, *v.* escape, 2301.
- Ettelles, *v.* endeavours, claims, undertakes, 520, 554, 3078.
- Ewyne or ewene, *adv.* even, 762, 774, 1122, 1293.
- Eynes, *s.* thickets, 1283, 1760, 2516.
- Fakene, *v.* fettle, set in order, 742.

- Falterde, *adj.* hanging in folds, 1092.
 Fande, *v.* try, endeavour, take care, 557, 656.
 Fange or faunge, holds, seizes, 425, 1005, 1249.
 Farlande, *s.* foreland, 880.
 Fatthe, *s.* tribute, 425.
 Fawcetez, *s.* cups, 205.
 Fawe, *adj.* variegated, glancing, 747.
 Fawntekyns, *s.* young children, 845.
 Fax, *s.* hair, 1078.
 Fay or fey, *adj.* dead; 'fay-levede,' left dead, killed, 394, 517, 978.
 Fele, *adj.* many, 845, 2162.
 Feletez, *s.* fillets, the flesh on the ribs, 1158, 2174.
 Felle, *s.* skin, 1081.
 Felschen, *v.* freshen, 1975.
 Feraunt, *adj.* pleasant, good, 1811.
 Fere, *adj.* whole, sound, unhurt, 2795, 3018.
 Ferkes, *v.* hastens, goes, 933, 984, 1452.
 Ferly, *s.* wonder, 2948.
 Ferlyche, *adj.* wonderful, 925.
 Fermysone, *s.* the closed time for hunting, also the enclosed and fatted deer as opposed to wild(?), 180.
 Ferrers, *adj.* with iron hoops, 2715.
 Ferrome, *adj.* foreign, strange, 3579; 'o ferrome,' afar, at a distance, 857.
 Ferynne, *s.* far part, the other side, 1875.
 Fette, *v.* fetch, 557.
 Fewle, *s.* foil, sword, 2071.
 Fewtyre, *s.* the rest which sup-
 ported the spear, 1366; 'castys in fewtyre,' lays his spear in rest.
 Feyed, *v.* mutilated, tore, 1114.
 Feyne, *v.* relax, cease, 1147.
 Fichene, *v.* pierce, 2098.
 Filsuez, *v.* dwells, 881.
 Filterde, *adj.* mixed, joined, 780; matted, 1078.
 Firthe or frithe, *s.* wood, 1708.
 Flay, *v.* terrify, 2441, 2780.
 Flayre, *s.* smell, odour, breath, 772.
 Fleche, *s.* part, division, 2482.
 Fleete, *v.* float, swim, 803.
 Flemyde, *v.* burnt, consumed, 1155.
 Fleryande, *adj.* grinning, 1088.
 Fleterede, *adj.* fitting, flying, 2097.
 Flitt, *v.* strike, wound, 2097.
 Flonez, *s.* arrows, 2097.
 Floyne or floygene, *s.* a sort of ship, 743.
 Fluke, *s.* flat-fish, 1088; floke-mouthed, 2780.
 Flyschande, *adj.* piercing, sharp, 2141, 2769.
 Foddenid, *v.* fed, produced, 3247.
 Fome, *s.* foam, smoke, 1079.
 Fonde, *adj.* foolish, mad, savage, 881.
 Fonde or fonode, *v.* try, taste, 147, 366, 3371, 3372.
 Fongede, *v.* took hold of, 3309.
 Foode or fode, *s.* fellow, 3777.
 Fore-lytenede, *v.* decreased, 254.
 Fore-maglede, *v.* engaged, hardly pressed, 1534.
 Fore-thy, *adv.* wherefore, 225.
 For-justede, *adj.* vanquished in fight, 2134, 2896.
 Formaylle, *s.* the female hawk, 4004.

- Forrayse, *v.* forays, lays waste, 1247.
 Forsey, forsoey, or forsesy, *adj.* of great force, 3301, 3308.
 For-wondsome, *adj.* very sorrowful, 3837.
 Fosterde, *s.* foresters, 300.
 Forthire, *adv.* forward, 300; 'the forthire,' the forward or first part.
 Foulde, *s.* earth, 1071.
 Foundez, *v.* goes, advances, 1228.
 Fourtedele, *v.* fourth part, 946.
 Foyle, *s.* box, 2705.
 Fraisez, *v.* questions, examines, (perhaps) tortures, 1248.
 Fraiste, *v.* try, prove, seek, 435, 1038, 3583.
 Fraknede, *adj.* freckled, spotted, 681, 1081.
 Frawnke, *s.* enclosure, 3248.
 Frayne or fraine, *v.* ask, enquire, 337, 1441.
 Fraythely, *adv.* suddenly, at once, 3865.
 Freke, *s.* man, fellow, wretch, 557, 742, 973.
 Frekke, *adj.* bold, eager, vigorous, 3303.
 Frekkly, *adv.* boldly, rapidly, 556, 788.
 Fremedly, *adv.* as a stranger, 1250, 3406.
 Fremmede, *adj.* strange, unkind, 3344.
 Fresone, *s.* Freisland horse, 1365.
 Fretyne or fretene, *adj.* consumed, 844; overlaid, 2142.
 Frithed, *adj.* arranged in hedges, 3248.
 Fromonde, *s.* forehead, 1112.
 Froske, *s.* frog, 1081.
 Froyt, *s.* fruit, 2708.
 Frumentee, *s.* a dish of wheat, milk, plums, etc., 180 (*v. Lib. Cure Cocorum*, p. 7).
 Frusche, *s.* sudden rush, 2901.
 Fruschene, *v.* strife, rout, 2805.
 Frythes, *v.* spare, 656, 1734.
 Fulsomeste, *adj.* foulest, 1061.
 Furthe, *s.* journey, course, 1525; path, roadway, 1897, 2144.
 Fylede, *adj.* defiled, 978.
 Gaddes, *s.* goads, spears, 3622.
 Galede, *v.* screamed, chattered, 927.
 Galte, *s.* pig, boar, 1101.
 Gardwynes, *s.* rewards, 1729.
 Garett, *s.* watch-tower, 562, 3105.
 Gayneste, *adj.* nearest, 487.
 Gayspande, *v.* gasping, 1462.
 Gedlynges or gadlynges, *s.* useless fellows, wretches, 2885.
 Geene, *s.* genies or spirits, 559.
 Gerse, *s.* grasp, 3945.
 Gersoms, *s.* guerdons, rewards, 165.
 Gerte (gers, gars, garte), *v.* caused, made, 1780, 3710.
 Gettlesse, *adj.* empty, possessionless, 2728.
 Ghywes, *s.* gyves, fetters, 3622.
 Glapyns, *v.* is frightened, 3950.
 Glaverande, *adj.* deceitful, treacherous, 2538.
 Glayfe or glaive, *s.* the blade or steel part of the spear, 3762.
 Gledys, *s.* sparks, 117.
 Glent, *s.* glance, 3864.
 Gliftes, *v.* looks, 3950.
 Glopned, *v.* was astonished, frightened, 1074, 2580.
 Glopynnyng, *s.* astonishment, 3864.

Glorede, *v.* glared, stared, 1074.
 Gobbede or gabbede, *adj.* deceitful, 1346.

Gobelets, *s.* part of the armour for the legs, 913.

Gobone, ? govone, *v.* gave, 4165.

Gole, *s.* small creek, 3726.

Gome, *s.* man, 85, etc.

Gose, *imp.* of go; 'gose over,' recount, 1266.

Gowces, *s.* the pieces of armour to protect the arm-pits, 3760.

Gowke, *s.* cuckoo, 927.

Grame, *s.* anger, grief, 1077, 3009.

Granes, *v.* groans, 2562.

Grape, *v.* feel, meditate, 2726.

Grassede, *v.* decked, furnished, 1091.

Graynes, *s.* red colour, 3464.

Graythide, *v.* gathered, arrayed, 373, 589, 602.

Grayvez, *s.* grieves, steel boots, 913, 2272.

Grees, *s.* season allotted for sport-ing, 658.

Grette, *v.* greeted, 84.

Gretande, *v.* crying, weeping, 951.

Grevede, *v.* snarled, gnashed his teeth, 1075.

Grevez or grefes, *s.* groves, 927, 1874, 2282.

Groffe, *s.* face, 3851. In O.E. 'groveling,' face downwards.

Grucchande, *adj.* grumbling, 1076.

Grygyng, *s.* 2510.

Grylych or gryslyche, *adj.* horrible, 1101.

Grythgide, *v.* vexed, 2557.

Gumbaldes, *s.* dishes of pastry, 2964.

Gye, *v.* direct, walk aright, 4.

Halfes, *s.* parts, sides, 441; 'sere halfes,' several sides.

Hally, *adv.* wholly, 1085.

Halse, *s.* necks, throats, and so heads, 1798.

Harlotte, *s.* common soldier, low fellow, 2446.

Harawnte, *v.* march, advance, 2449.

Harske, *adj.* rough, harsh, 1084.

Hathielle, *adj.* noble, great, 358, 988.

Haylede, *v.* dropped, 2077.

Hawe, *s.* awe, fear (?), 3705.

Heddys-mene, *s.* chief men, rulers, 281.

Hede-rapys, *s.* head-ropes, 3669.

Hedlynge, *adv.* headlong, 3830.

Hedoyne, *s.* a sauce, 184.

Heldede, *v.* inclined, obeyed, 3369.

Hele, *s.* health, comfort, 2631.

Hemmes, *s.* borders, hems, 1648.

Hende, *adv.* close at hand, 1283.

Hende, *adj.* gentle, 2631, 3880.

Hente, *s.* hold, 1842.

Hentez, *v.* seizes, holds, 1132, 2918.

Herbarjours, *s.* leaders, advanced guard, 2448.

Herbergage, *s.* lodging, encampment, 3015.

Herede, *adj.* covered with hair, 1083.

Herne-pane, *s.* brain-pan, skull, 2229.

Heslyne, *adj.* of hazel, 2504.

Hete or hette, *v.* promise, 2127, 2632.

Hethely, *adv.* contemptuously, 268.

Hethynge, *s.* scorn, 1842.

Hevede, *s.* head; 'appone-hevede,' head-foremost, 262.

Hewede, *v.* carried, 4092.

- Hey (*superl.* hext), *adj.* high, 166.
 Heyndly, *adv.* courteously, 15.
 Heyne (for heþne or heþune), *adv.*
 hence, 2436.
 Hillid, buried in the flesh, covered,
 1120, 3607.
 Hirste or hurste, *s.* wood, 3370.
 Hodles, *v.* crawls, 2308.
 Hopes, *s.* valleys, 2503.
 Hovys, *v.* stay, remain, 377, 713.
 Hoursches, *v.* goes headlong, 2110.
 Hufe, *v.* rage, fuss, 1688.
 Huke, *s.* cloke, 734.
 Huke-nebbyde, *adj.* hook-nosed,
 1082.
 Hulke, *s.* wretch, fellow, 1058,
 1085.
 Hunde-fisch, *s.* dog-fish, 1084.
 Hurdace, *s.* scaffolding, platform,
 3627.
 Hurdez, *v.* abides, 1010.
 Hyely, *adv.* loudly, 1058.
 Hyled, *v.* covered, 184.
 Hymlande, *adj.* encircling, hem-
 ming in, 2503.
 Hyngede, *v.* hanged, 281.

 Iche, *v.* rush, charge, 1411.
 Inmette, *s.* internals, 1122.
 Irous, *adj.* angry, passionate, 1329.

 Jaggede or joggede, *v.* pierced,
 2910, 2892, 2894.
 Jambe, *adj.* capering, active (see
 Rambe), 2895.
 Japez, mocks, jests, 1398.
 Jeryne, *s.* piece of armour; 'jeryne
 of acres,' armour of Acre, 903.
 Joynter, *s.* joints of the armour,
 2894.
 Justyfyte, *v.* do justice to, 663.

 Kaunt, *adj.* bold, 2195.
 Kayre or cayre, *v.* go, journey, 6,
 243, etc.
 Kele, *v.* cool, 1839.
 Kelle or calle, *s.* cap or coif, 3259.
 Kempe, *v.* contend for superiority,
 2634.
 Kempis, *s.* knights, 1003.
 Kenet, *s.* a small hound, 122.
 Kerse, *s.* strength, temper of
 sword, 4195.
 Kest, *v.* cast, 118.
 Ketelle-hatte, *s.* helmet, 2094,
 3996.
 Klevys, *s.* cliffs, 2396.
 Klokes, *s.* clutches, claws, 792.
 Kwne, *v.* give, 1565.
 Kyd or kydd, *adj.* famous, 96, etc.
 Kyrnelles, *s.* embattlements, 3047.
 Kystys, *s.* chests, coffers, 2302,
 2336.
 Kyth, *s.* country, kingdom, 28, etc.

 Lached, *v.* stripped, 1515.
 Lade-sterne, *s.* load-star, leading
 or guiding star, 751.
 Lakes, *s.* locks, 2149.
 Lagere, *s.* couch, 2293.
 Laggene, *v.* tilt, 2542.
 Laghte or laughte, *v.* taken, 874,
 1817, 1826.
 Late or lote, *s.* look, features, 248,
 536, 1462.
 Lathe, *s.* ease, compliance, 458;
 "Be now lathe or lette," Be
 there compliance or opposition.
 Layke, *s.* sport, game, 1599.
 Layne, *v.* conceal, 2398, 2594.
 Layttede, *v.* sought, acquired, held
 to be in possession of, 254.
 Lechene, *v.* heal, cure, 2388.

Lechhyde, *adj.* cut in slices, 188; *v.*

Lib. Cure Cocorum, pp. 13, 50.

Lede, *s.* lad, man, 138, etc.

Lemand, *adj.* glittering, gleaming,
2463, 2464.

Lendez, *s.* loins, 1047.

Lenge, *v.* lounge, delay, tarry, 72,
343.

Lesse, *v.* lose, 1599.

Lesse, *s.* lie, 159.

Letande, *v.* looking, 3832.

Letherly, *adv.* vilely, shamefully,
1268.

Leskes, *s.* flanks, 1097, 3280.

Leve, *v.* believe, 1099.

Levere, *s.* encampment, 3079.

Ligham, *s.* dead body, 3282, 4270.

Lire, *s.* flesh, face, 3282, 3955,
4273.

Lokerde, *adj.* distorted, 779.

Los or loosse, *s.* honour, praise,
254, 474.

Lothene, *adj.* hideous, 778.

Lowe, *s.* flame, heat, glare, 194.

Lowrande, *adj.* sad, gloomy, 1446.

Lowttede, *v.* worshipped, bowed
down to, 3286.

Loyotour, *s.* embroidery, 3254.

Lufe, *s.* the loof of a ship, 744,
750.

Luffly, *adv.* lovingly, 248.

Lugge or lygge, *v.* lodge, lie, stay,
remain, 152.

Lussche, *s.* violence, force, 3849.

Lutterde, *adj.* crooked, twisted,
779.

Luyschede, *v.* lashed out, 2226.

Lyarde, *adj.* disordered, 3281.

Lygmane, *s.* liegeman, 420.

Lympyde, *v.* happened, befell, 292,
875.

Lyth, *v.* listen, 12.

"Thenne watz hit lif upon list to lythen
the houndez."

—(Sir Gawaine, 1719.)

Lythe, *adj.* gentle, smooth, 1517.

Lythe, *s.* land, property, kingdom,
994, 1653.

Lythyre, *s.* leader, ruler (?), 23.

Mangere, *s.* diet, keep of a priso-
ner, 1588.

Manrede, *s.* power, *lit.* homage, 127.

Masondewes, *s.* Maisons Dieu, hos-
pitals, 3039.

Mele, *v.* speak, 382, 679.

Melle, *v.* mingle, communicate, 938.

Menske, *s.* honour, 126.

Menskes, *v.* deserves honour, 1303.

Merke, *v.* go, 427, etc.

Merkes, *s.* boundaries, 1147.

Mett, *v.* dreamed, 3224.

Mofes, *v.* overcomes, 3324.

Moles, *v.* 3057. See *Mele*.

Mone, *v.* shall (Prov. ? *mun*), 813.

Mowe, *v.* may, 3813.

Mysese (? plural of *myx*) *s.* wretches,
667.

Mysse, *s.* evil, wrong, 1315.

Myx, *s.* wretch, 989.

Naye, *s.* (yolke of a nay, for *zolke*
of an aye = egg) 3284.

Nedys, *s.* needs, demands, 85.

Neyvesome, *adj.* renowned, 523.

Notez, *v.* make use of, 1815.

Notte, *s.* business, affair, 1816.

Nomene, *v.* taken, 1437.

Nurree, *s.* adopted child, 689.

Oches, *v.* breaks, 2565, 3676.

O-dawe, *adv.* out of days, *i.e.* out
of life (see *Dawez*), 3737.

- On-dreghe, *adv.* at a distance, 786, 787.
- Orfracez, *s.* embroideries, ornaments, 902, 2142.
- Ostayande, *v.* sojourning, 3503.
- Overlynge, *s.* superior, ruler, 289, 520.
- Ownd, *adj.* laced, slashed, 193.
- Owte, *adj.* foreign, 30.
- Palle, *s.* fine cloth, 1288, 2478.
- Palyd, *v.* ornamented, 1287, 1375.
- Pare, *v.* injure, 4048.
- Pastorelles, *s.* shepherds, swineherds, 3121.
- Paumes, *s.* hands, claws, 776.
- Pavys, *s.* a shield, 3461, 3626.
- Pavysers, *s.* soldiers armed with the pavys, 3005.
- Payses, *v.* force, 3038, 3043.
- Peghttes, *s.* Piets, 4126.
- Pensels, *s.* small banners, 1289, 2411.
- Perrye, *s.* jewellery, 2461, 3462.
- Pertly, *adv.* apart, 2918.
- Pertyes, *v.* parts, 1925.
- Pillion (hat), *s.* priest's, or large hat.
- Pilour, *s.* pilferer, robber, 2133.
- Plasche, *s.* a marshy piece of ground, 2799.
- Plattes, *s.* planks for seats, 2478.
- Plumpe, *s.* crowd, 2199.
- Plyande, *v.* working, 777.
- Pome, *s.* the kingly globe, 3355.
- Pomelle, *s.* small globe at the head of a flag-staff, 1289.
- Poveralle, *adj.* poor, labouring men, 3121.
- Poyne, *v.* stitch with a bodkin, 2625.
- Prys or pris, *adj.* precious, chief, 2, 569.
- Pyghte, *adj.* decked, garnished, pitched, 212, 1300, 2478.
- Pykes, *s.* points, 777.
- Pyne, *s.* lamentation, 3044.
- Pynne, *v.* pine, annoy, trouble, 4048.
- Qwarelles, *s.* short arrows for cross bow, 2103.
- Querte—'in querte,' equivalent to being in life; querte, joy, activity, life, 3811.
- Qwarte, *v.* quashed, smashed, 3390.
- Qwyke, *adj.* alive, 1736.
- Qwyne, *adv.* whence, 3504.
- Raas, *v.* tear, snatch, 362.
- Racches, *s.* scenting hounds, 4000.
- Rade, *adj.* afraid, 2882.
- Radly, *adv.* swiftly, 1529.
- Radness, *s.* fear, 120.
- Raike or rayke, *s.* path, 1525, 2986.
- Ramby or jambe, *adj.* prancing, spirited, 373, 2895.
- Ranez, *s.* rushes, 923.
- Raply, *adv.* quickly, 1763.
- Rared, *v.* roared, 784.
- Rasches, *v.* rush, go rashly, 2107.
- Rathe, rathely, or raythely, *adv.* quickly, soon, 237, 1275.
- Raw (on), *s.* in rotation, 633.
- Rawnsakes (*imp.*) *v.* search, 3229, 3740; probe, 4305.
- Raykede, *v.* rushed, flowed, ran, 237, 1057, 2984.
- Raylide, *v.* arrayed, ornamented, 3264.
- Raymede, *v.* roamed, made incursion, 100.

- Reched, *s.* jewels, 3264.
 Reddour, *s.* violence, eagerness, succour, 109, 485, 1418.
 Rede, *v.* advise, 550.
 Redyne, *v.* disposed of, 52.
 Refede, *v.* deprived, 960.
 Rehetede, *v.* received, entertained, cheered, 221, 411, 3199.
 Reke, *s.* path, 1041.
 Relevis, *v.* rally, 2278.
 Remmes or remys, *v.* cries, laments, 2197, 4156.
 Renayede, *adj.* renegade, 2914, 3573.
 Renye, *s.* renegade, 2795.
 Rependez, *v.* hasten, 2107.
 Revaye, *v.* rejoice, 3276.
 Revare, *s.* river, 62.
 Rewe, *v.* have pity, 866.
 Rewfulle, *adj.* sorrowful, 1049.
 Reynes, *s.* journey, course, 3165.
 Rigg, *s.* back, 800.
 Rittes, *v.* rends, dashes in pieces, 2138, 3754, 3825.
 Rog, *s.* assembly, people? 3273.
 Roggede, *v.* rocked? 784.
 Romede, *v.* growl, roar, groan, 424, 784, 888.
 Roo, *s.* misfortune, evil, 1751.
 Roo, *s.* wheel, 3363, 3375.
 Roo, *s.* roe-deer, 922.
 Rosers, *s.* thickets, 923.
 Rosselde, *adj.* sharpened, 2881.
 Rowme or rowmme, *adj.* wide, loose, roomy, 432, 1454, 3471.
 Rusche, *v.* destroy, overthrow, 1339.
 Ruselede, *adj.* russet-clad, 1096.
 Ruyde, ruydly, or ruydlyche, *adj.* and *adv.* rude, rudely, fiercely, impetuously, 1049, 785, 1877.
 Rybys, *v.* rips, tears, 3825.
 Ryfez, *v.* thrusts, rives, tears, 1474, 2914.
 Ryghttez, *v.* See *Rittes*.
 Ryndez, *s.* thickets, 921, 1884, 3364.
 Rype, *v.* search, 3941.
 Ryste *adj.* rusty, rough, 1428.
 Ryvaye, *v.* hunt, 4000.
 Saghetylle, *v.* be satisfied or reconciled, 330.
 Sakeles, *adj.* innocent, without blame, 3400, 3987, 3994.
 Sale, *s.* hall, court, 82.
 Sandismene, *s.* messengers, 266, 1429.
 Saughte, *s.* peace, 1548, 3053.
 Saynned, *adj.* blessed, cared for, 966, 969.
 Schafte, *s.* spear, 2169.
 Schaftmonde, *s.* spear length, 2546.
 Schake, *v.* hasten, move, advance.
 Schalkes, *s.* men-at-arms, soldiers, 1857, 2211, 2333, 2456, 3748.
 Schalyde, *adj.* enclosed, 766.
 Schathe, scaith, or skaithe, *s.* harm, mischief, 292.
 Schawes or shawes, *s.* glades, 1723, 1760, 1765.
 Schede, *v.* pour, 2923.
 Schenchipe, *s.* disgrace, 4300.
 Scherde, *v.* cut, wounded, destroyed, 1856, 2435.
 Schiltrounis, *s.* bands, 1765, 1813, 1856.
 Schire, *adj.* scanty, 1760; clear, bright, 3845, 3846, 3601.
 Schoderide, *v.* shuddered, 2106.
 Schone, *v.* shrink, retreat, 314, 1717.

- Schowande, *adj.* bending (*lit.* shoving), 1099.
- Schrowde, *s.* dress, 3629.
- Schreede, *v.* shred, sprinkled, 767.
- Schrympe, *s.* monster, dragon, 767.
- Schuntes or schountes, *v.* hesitates, delays, 1055.
- Seche, *v.* seek, 3234.
- Sektour, *s.* successor, follower, 665.
- Segge, *s.* servant, man, follower, 134, 1420, 1422.
- Selcouth, *adj.* wonderful, curious, 75, 1308, 3197.
- Semblant, *s.* pomp, 75.
- Semble, *v.* cope with, meet, 967.
- Sendelle, *s.* a sort of silken stuff, 2299.
- Serfed, *v.* deserved, 1068.
- Sere, *adj.* several, 192, 607.
- Serte, *s.* decree, 2927.
- Sesyne or seizin, *s.* possession, 3589.
- Seward, *v.* following, 81.
- Sewes, *s.* stews, made dishes, 192.
 "Poure on the *sewe* and serve it."
 (Lib. Cure Cocorum, p. 21.)
- Seyne (should be read *sepne*?), then, afterwards, 192, 464, 939.
- Seyne, *s.* saint, 2871.
- Seyne, *v.* boiled, cooked, 188.
 "In hir own blood *seyn*."
 —(Lib. Cure Cocorum, p. 21.)
- Sirquyttrie, *s.* pride, 3400.
- Sittande, *adj.* fitting, becoming, 953.
- Sittandly, *adv.* suitably, 159.
- Skathelle or seathylle, *adj.* dangerous, 32, 1642.
- Skathlye, *adj.* (should be read *skatheles*) without injury, 1562.
- Skayres, *v.* frightens, 2468.
- Skewe, *v.* rescue, 1562.
- Skottefers, *s.* shooters.
- Skowtte-waches, *s.* watchmen, 2468.
- Skroggez, *s.* stunted bushes, scrub, 1642.
- Skyst (should be read *skyft*?), shift, manage, arrange, 32, 1653.
- Slakkes, *s.* pools, marshes, 3720.
- Slale (should be read *skale*?), crafty, 3118.
- Slawyne or slaveine, *s.* a pilgrim's mantle, 3475.
- Sleghte, *s.* craft, sleight, 3419.
- Slewthe, *s.* sloth, 3222.
- Sleygly, *adj.* slyly, cunningly, 2976.
- Slomowre, *s.* slumber, 3222.
- Slope, *s.* valley, 2978.
- Slote or slotte, *s.* pit of the stomach, 2254, 2976. See *Sir Gawaine and Glossary*.
- Slottede, *v.* stabbed, 3856.
- Slowde, *s.* mud, slush, 3720.
- Slyke, *adj.* such; 'then was it slyke,' then was there such, 3720.
- Snelle, *adj.* quick, swift, 57.
- Sope, *s.* a sup or hasty repast, 1890.
- Soppe, *s.* company, body, 1493, 3730, 3746.
- Spakely, *adv.* quickly, 2063.
- Spalddyd, *adj.* shivered, 3700.
- Spayre, *s.* spare-rib, 2060.
- Spekes, *s.* spokes, 3264.
- Speltis, *s.* splinters, stripes, 3265.
- Spencis, *s.* consumption, wasting, 3164.
- Sprente, *v.* spurted, leapt, 2062, 3701.
- Sproutez, *v.* sprawls, 2063.
- Stale, *s.* company, band (*lit.* seat), 377, 1355.

- Stamyne, *s.* deck, 3659.
 Stereborde, *s.* starboard, 745.
 Steryne, *adj.* stern, brave, 157, 377.
 Sterys, steers, guides, 917.
 Stirttelys (should be read *stightelys*?, arrays), 3623.
 Stokes, *v.* strike, stab, 2554.
 Stotais, *v.* abide, delay, 1435.
 Stoundys, *v.* are placed, stand, 3624.
 Stowndys, *s.* times, 3889.
 Stour, *s.* war, fight, 377.
 Stowuntyng, *s.* stunting, stopping, 491.
 Strates, *s.* streets, paths, 561.
 Strekez, *v.* stretches, 1229, 3102.
 Streke, *adv.* quickly, 3102.
 Streng, *s.* strong place, entrenchment, 1926.
 Struye, *v.* destroy, 561.
 Stuffe, *v.* treat, provision, 1932, 2369.
 Sty, *s.* path, 3467.
 Styghtylle or stightill, *v.* arrange, dispose of, 157.
 Sulayne, *adj.* sole, alone, 2593.
 Summes, *s.* assemblies, hosts, 606.
 Surepel, *s.* cover, case, 3318.
 Surrawns, *s.* assurance, treaty, 3182.
 Surs, *s.* rising, 1978, 2511.
 Suters, *s.* stalls, 501.
 Swafres or swayfres, *v.* starts, 3971.
 Swange, *s.* loins, groin, 1129.
 Swanke (*pret.* of swinke), *v.* toil, labour, hence strike with sword, 2962, 3362.
 Swape, *s.* stroke, blow, 314.
 Swarthe, *s.* sward, 1126.
 Swayne, *s.* swain, man, 3361.
 Swefennys, *s.* dreams, 3229.
 Swefnyng, *s.* sleep, dreaming, 759, 812.
 Sweperly, *adv.* swiftly, 1128, 1465.
 Swelte, *v.* faint, die, 813, 2962, 2983, 1465, 1466.
 Sweys, *v.* descends, falls, 57, 1467.
 Swier, *s.* squire, 2960, 3704.
 Swoghe, *s.* sound, 759.
 Swowyng, *s.* sound of running water, 931.
 Swtte, swete or swett, life, 2145, 3361. See Glossary to *Alliterative Poems*.
 Swykede, *v.* deceived, failed, 1795, 3362.
 Swym, *s.* swoon, 4247.
 Swyng, *s.* blow, 3361.
 Swyngene, *v.* overthrow, hurled down, 1466.
 Swyre-bane, *s.* neck-bone, 2960.
 Swythe, *adj.* quick, 409, 813, 1128.
 Sybbe, *adj.* near of kin, 645, 681.
 Sybredyne, *s.* kindred, 691, 4146.
 Sydlynges or syddynges, *adv.* sideways, sidelong, 1039, 1243.
 Sylande, *v.* gliding, 1297, 3795.
 Syte or sytte, *s.* grief, sorrow, shame, 1060, 1305.
 Sythyne or sithen, *adv.* afterwards, then, 56, 159, 169, 184.
 Tachementes, *s.* appurtenances, belongings, 1568.
 Tachesede, *v.* attached, 821.
 Taghte, *adj.* courteous, well-trained, 178.
 Takelle, *s.* tackle? 3619.
 Talmes, *v.* is disheartened (*lit.* benumb, deaden), 2581.

- Targe, *s.* document, paper, 89.
 Temez, *v.* pours, empties, 1801.
 Tempest, *v.* act violently, 2408.
 Tene, *v.* grieve, 264.
 Tene, *s.* sorrow, 1956.
 Thee, *s.* thigh, 1846.
 Thirllede, *v.* pierced, 1858.
 Thole, *v.* suffer, endure, permit, 676.
 Thraa or throo, *adj.* bold, 249, 3295, 3296.
 Thrawe, *s.* agony, struggle, 1150.
 Threppede, *v.* rushed, forced his way, 2216.
 Throly, *adv.* fiercely, severely, 2217.
 Thrynges, *v.* grips, 1150; struggles, fights, 2217.
 Thrystez, *v.* thrusts, 1151.
 Thursse, *s.* giant, 1100. (Still used in E. Ang. counties.)
 Tide, *s.* season, fitness, right, 275.
 Tegers, *s.* coats, 178, 3190.
 Tolowris, *s.* tiller of a boat (?), 3619.
 To-rattys, *v.* tear, rend, scatter, 2235.
 Torfere, *s.* torture, trouble, punishment, 1956.
 To-stonayede, *adj.* confounded, astonished, 1436.
 Towyne, *v.* tow, draw, 3656.
 Towne, *adj.* well trained, 178. (Still exists in wan-ton.)
 Toyelys, *s.* tools, furniture, weapons, 732, 3617.
 Traise, *v.* go, 1629.
 Traylede, *v.* dragged, drawn, 250.
 Trayne, *s.* stratagem, turn, 1630.
 Trayste, *v.* trusts, 1987.
 Traystely, *adv.* safely, trustily, 1976.
 Trete, *s.* row, 3656.
 Trett, *v.* treat, 249, 250, 263.
 Treunt, *v.* march, hasten, 1976, 2017, 3901.
 Trewe, *s.* truce, 3192.
 Tristly, *adv.* safely, 731.
 Trofelande, *adj.* trifling, 1683.
 Trome, *v.* array in order of battle, 3593.
 Troufflyng, *s.* idle words, 114.
 Trufles, *s.* lies, 89.
 Trussez, *v.* pack up, load, 731, 1976, 3593.
 Tryede *v.* (read *trynede*), went, 3592.
 Tryne or trine (pret. *tron*), *v.* to go in procession or order, 1757, 3193, 3593.
 Tydd, *v.* befallen, fared, 3655.
 Tykes, *s.* dogs (applied to men), 3643.
 Tymbyrde, *v.* contrived, fashioned, 3743.
 Tyne, *v.* lose, 2934, 1954.
 Tynt (pret. of *tyne*), lost, killed, 272, 770.
 Tyte, *adv.* quickly, 737.
 Umbeclappes, *v.* embraces, clasps, surrounds, 1779, 1819.
 Umrere, *s.* visor, 943.
 Undroune, *s.* nine o'clock a.m. 463.
 Unfaire, *adv.* badly, horribly, 1045.
 Unfawghte (read *unsaughte*, q.v.).
 Unfaye, *adj.* unwounded, alive, 2797.
 Unfers, *adj.* weak, feeble, 4123.
 Unfoundyde, *adj.* untried, unstable, 2485.
 Unfraystede, *adj.* untried, inexperienced, 2737.

- Unfrely, *adj.* vilely, 780.
 Unsaughte, *adj.* at strife, 1306, 1457.
 Unsaughtely, *adv.* unfriendly, 1501.
 Unselely (for *unselely*), miserably, 979.
 Unsownde, *adj.* dead, slain, wounded, 3932, 3943, 4295.
 Unwemmyde, *adj.* spotless, 3802.
 Unwynly, *adv.* sorrowfully, 955.
 Upcynes, *s.* pinnacles, turrets? 3676.
 Utters, *v.* ushers, conducts, 418.
- Vernacle, *s.* the holy picture of Christ supposed to be miraculously emprinted on a handkerchief, 297, 309, 348.
 Verrede, *v.* covered, 2573.
 Vertly, *adv.* secretly? 3169.
 Viage, *s.* journey, march, 2037.
 Voute, *s.* mien, expression, 137.
 Vyse, *s.* aim, 2612, 2424.
- Wache, *v.* watch, 547, 613.
 Wage, *v.* engage, hire, 547.
 Wagge, *v.* move, lead, 333, 1615.
 Wale, *adj.* beautiful, noble, choice, 182? 741, 2148.
 Wale, *s.* gun-wale, side of ship, 740.
 Walkyne, *s.* welkin, sky, 787.
 Walopande, *adj.* swift, galloping, 2828.
 Walowes, *v.* rolls, 1142.
 Wandrethe, *s.* trouble, grief, 323, 384, 2370, 3158.
 Wandsomdly, *adv.* sorrowfully, 4013.
 Waresche, *v.* recover, be healed, 2186.
- Warlow or werlaugge, *s.* warlock, unnatural wretch, traitor, 1140, 3772.
 Warne, *v.* deny, forbid, refuse, 700.
 Wasterne, *s.* desert, 3234.
 Wathe or wawhte, injury, danger, 2669, 3234, 3481.
 Wathely, *adv.* dangerously, 2090.
 Watte, *v.* I watte = wot, believe, 2224.
 Wayfe, *v.* wander, stray, 960.
 Waykly, *adj.* weakly, sorrowfully, 697.
 Wekyrly, *adv.* badly, 2104.
 Welters, *v.* rolls, 890, 1140.
 Wenez, *v.* thinkest, 963.
 Weredes or werdes, *s.* destinies, fate, 385, 3890.
 Werkande, *adj.* aching, sore, 2148.
 Werkkes, *v.* aches, 2690.
 Werraye, *v.* make war, 546.
 Werpe or warpe, *v.* throw out, utter, 9, 150.
 Wery, *v.* curse, 699, 959.
 Wiet, *v.* know, 420.
 Wightenez, *s.* valour, 1806.
 Wille, *adj.* lonely, 3837.
 Willed, *adj.* astray, 3231.
 Wlonke, *adj.* fair, 3155, 3339.
 Wodely, *adv.* madly, 2828.
 Wodewyse, *s.* madman, 3818.
 Wolfe-hevede, *s.* outlaw, 1093.
 Wone, *s.* abode, dwelling, 1300, 2472.
 Woonde or wonde, *v.* delay, stop, 1615.
 Worthe, *v.* be; 'mote ze werthe,' may ye be, 4089, 4105.
 Wraythe, *v.* thrust, twisted, 1093.
 Wrethe, *s.* anger, wrath, 2225.

Wrokyne, *v.* avenged, 2225.
 Wrothely, *adv.* fiercely, 1141.
 Wrotherayle, *s.* ill-fate, 3155.
 Wrythyne, *v.* struggle, 1141.
 Wyderwyne, *s.* enemy, 2045.
 Wyes or wyese (sing. *wy* or *wye*),
 men, 56, 533.
 Wyghte, *adj.* quick, 1615.
 Wyghte, *s.* man, 959.
 Wyghtly, *adv.* quickly, 70.
 Wyghtnesse, *s.* quickness, vigor,
 boldness, 258.
 Wylnez, *v.* desires, wishes, 962.
 Wynche, *v.* flinch, 2104.
 Wynly, *adv.* pleasantly, 3339.

Wynlyche, *adj.* handsome, plea-
 sant, 181.

Ythez, *s.* waves, 741, 747.

ȝapely, *adv.* quickly, 1502.
 ȝernez, *v.* holds, keeps, 1938.
 ȝermys, *v.* screams, cries, 3912.
 ȝernez, *v.* desirest, 1502.
 ȝitt, *adv.* yet, 1424, 1435.
 ȝoldene, *v.* yielded, 2482.
 ȝole, *s.* Yule, Christmas, 1629.
 ȝomane, *s.* yeoman, 2629.
 ȝorke (read *ȝoske*), cry, sob, 3912.



